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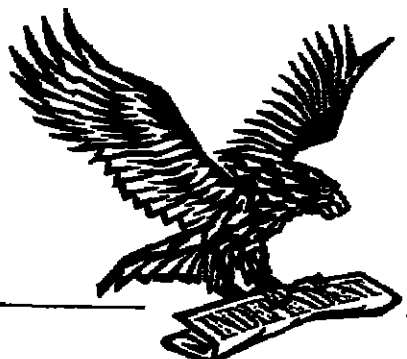
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Booing 'God Save The Queen'

page 18



Proms '96: exclusive ticket offer

Eight-page pull-out, Section Two



Breaking cover: the SAS fights its enemy within

Section Two, Cover Story



Why feeding baby is fraught with problems

Section Two, Living



THE INDEPENDENT

3,000

THURSDAY 30 MAY 1996

WEATHER Mainly bright with sunny spells 40p (IR 45p)

Dunblane inquiry told how Hamilton took four minutes and 105 bullets to kill 17

Above all, let us be rid of this

JAMES CUSICK

It looked like something from a Tarantino film. At 4pm yesterday on the 25 monitors around the Albert Halls, in Stirling, a photograph appeared of a dead man dressed in black, lying on the floor of a school gymnasium, pools of blood around his head, four handguns near him.

But this was no film; rather a stark slice of the horrors of 13 March this year in a small, prosperous Scottish town. For the parents and relatives of the 16 children and one teacher, killed by the man they were looking at on the screen, it was the revisitation of a monster - Thomas Hamilton.

On the first day of the inquiry before Lord Cullen into the massacre at Dunblane Primary School, Hamilton's determination to take as many lives as possible was there for all to see.

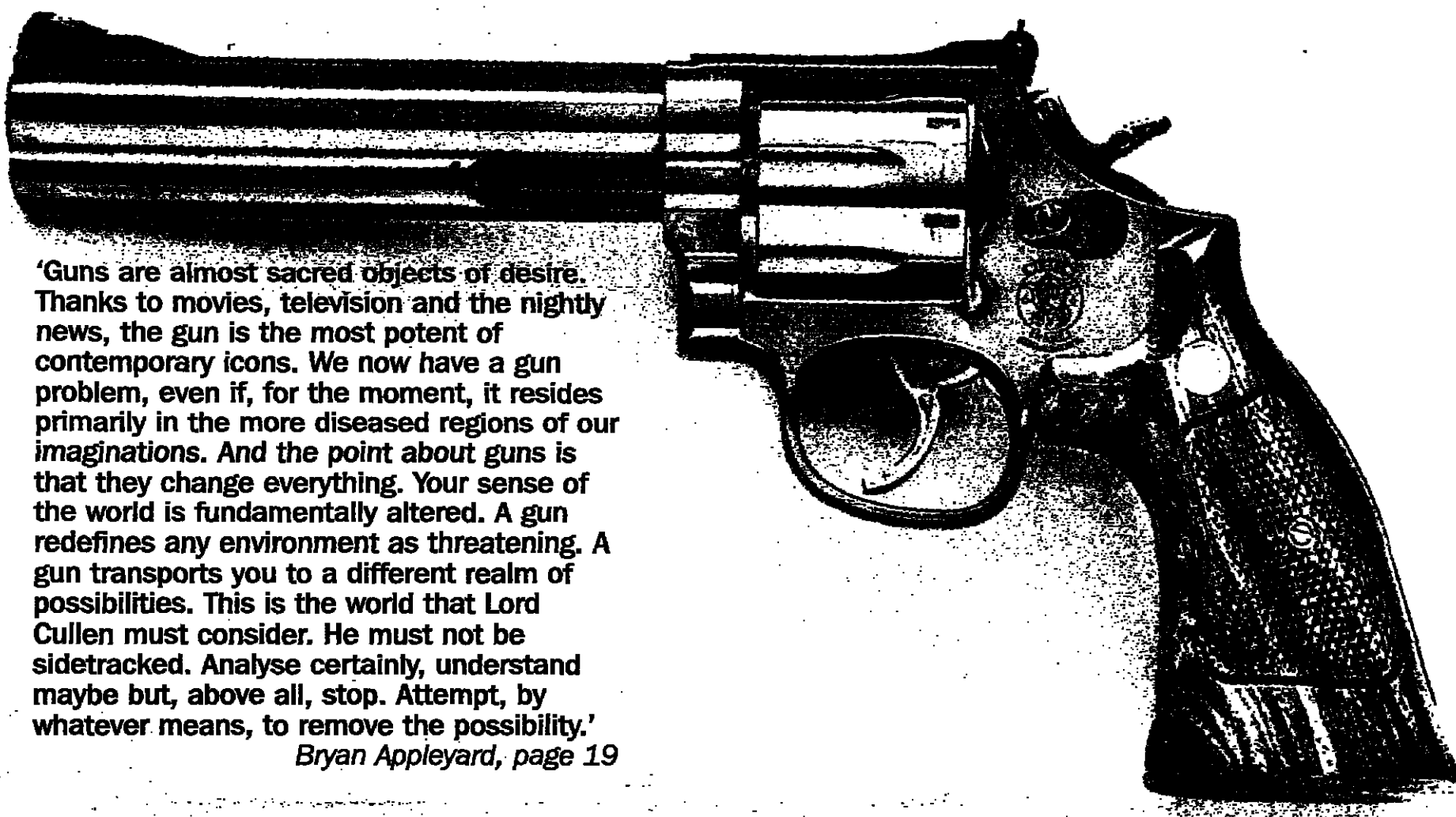
He had carried with him to the Stirlingshire primary school enough ammunition to wipe out every pupil and every member of staff. This year, 709 pupils were registered at Dunblane. There were 31 teachers.

According to a ballistics expert, Hamilton took to the school, in a camera bag, two high-powered pistols, two revolvers and a total of 743 rounds of ammunition. He used a Browning pistol 104 times, reloading and reloading as he pumped bullets into the young bodies. The 105th bullet, from a different gun - a Smith and Wesson - he reserved for himself. Hamilton had earlier tried to isolate the school by cutting telephone wires.

The parents and relatives of those who lost their lives in the Dunblane gym sat in the balcony of the inquiry hall, above and out of sight of the media.

'Guns are almost sacred objects of desire. Thanks to movies, television and the nightly news, the gun is the most potent of contemporary icons. We now have a gun problem, even if, for the moment, it resides primarily in the more diseased regions of our imaginations. And the point about guns is that they change everything. Your sense of the world is fundamentally altered. A gun redefines any environment as threatening. A gun transports you to a different realm of possibilities. This is the world that Lord Cullen must consider. He must not be sidetracked. Analyse certainly, understand maybe but, above all, stop. Attempt, by whatever means, to remove the possibility.'

Bryan Appleyard, page 19



They heard from physical education teacher, Ellen Harriid how their children were dressed in PE kit and jumping with joy before their lesson in the gymnasium.

They heard how the class had been invaded by Hamilton, how he had sprayed bullets around the gym, how some children, perhaps theirs, had been

shot up to seven times by the 105 rounds that Hamilton had fired from one Browning handgun.

The parents heard how the guns were specialised weapons, designed for accuracy, speed and competition shooting, not the mass murder that they were finally used for.

In the balcony above the trib-

unal there was almost no noise throughout the entire day.

At sides, some relatives were visible. Some held their heads. No one talked. There gazes seemed fixed as each new witness gave their account.

The care taken not to reveal precise details of any of the murdered children was re-

spected and carefully monitored by the Lord Advocate, Lord Mackay of Drumadoon, who led the Crown's questions. But it was a difficult task.

Eileen Harriid described how, huddled in the gym store, with shot children lying near her, and herself suffering from bullet wounds in the arms and

chest, she had put her fingers up to her mouth to remind them to keep quiet. As Hamilton continued to shoot, she said: "The children were amazingly calm."

The monitors inside the hall showed the inside of the gym in graphic plans.

Aerial photographs of the school, its gym now bulldozed,

showed the place where the children were slaughtered. And when ballistics expert Malcolm Chisholm described Hamilton's probable movements inside the gym and the line of bullets that came from his gun, it would have been difficult for any parent in the land not to have placed their children there.

Finally, having been spared any photograph of the gymnasium, the clock in the hall moved to 4pm.

And having checked with Lord Cullen first, the photograph of Hamilton appeared on the monitors. He had put his gun in his mouth and pulled the trigger.

The beams that children were supposed to play on that morning were shown in front of him.

There was silence as the photograph remained up for only a short time.

Detective Chief Superintendent John Ogg, one of the first officers at the school on March 13, indicated that the slaughter could have been much worse.

Hamilton at one stage left the gym to fire outside. One teacher was grazed by a bullet; a boy, fired at through the gym window, was hit by flying glass.

He shot at the class of primary seven and their teacher. Mrs Kay Gordon. Hamilton's bullets passed straight the classroom, said Mr Ogg.

One bullet hit a small chair near a pupil's desk. Mrs Gordon had seen Hamilton firing in the gym on the 28 pupils of primary one and their teachers. She told her own pupils to get down on the floor.

Mercifully for the people of Dunblane, they are still alive.

In a statement read out to the inquiry, assistant teacher Mary Blake, who sustained four wounds to the head and legs, said: "I was hit on my head and was hurting."

"Something terrible was happening. The screams seemed to be inside my head. Children were running around, hysterical. Blood was splattered everywhere."

One child lying to her in the store, said "What a bad man." Killed in minutes, page 4

Northern Ireland and Israel: Two elections born of violence, overshadowed by the fear of turmoil to come

Extremism is likely to win again

DAVID MC KITTRICK
Ireland Correspondent

Sadly for the British government, the plain fact is that elections in Northern Ireland produce, more often than not, bad news for those who hope for harmony, agreement and reconciliation. Very often they have generated messages unwelcome to London; and today ministers must have the sinking feeling that the same thing may happen again.

This election, to create a 110-strong forum to pave the way for all-party talks, was billed as the gateway to talks, an expression of the democratic will which would serve as a preliminary for far-reaching peace negotiations. But that was when there was an IRA ceasefire: now there is none, and unless one appears soon, the talks set for 10 June look like being severely limited in their scope.

Worse than this, from London's point of view, is the fact that support for the extremes seems to be holding up well. The Rev Ian Paisley is on the electoral rampage, while there is no sign that Sinn Fein is losing ground. This is not a promising basis for talks.

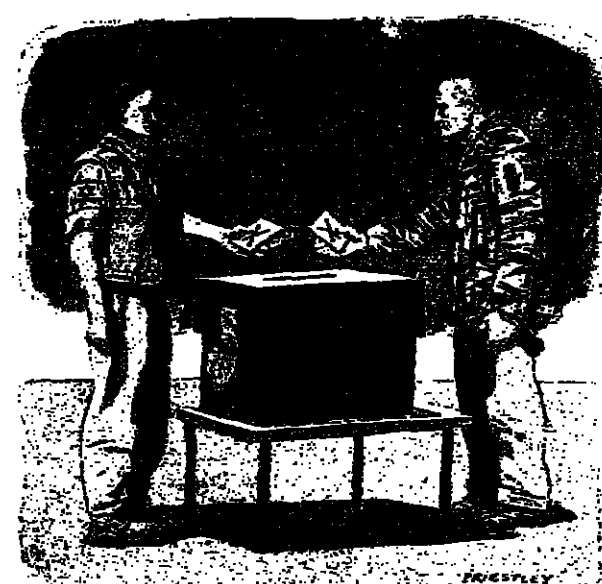
The election was asked for by David Trimble, the newish and

electorally untested leader of the Ulster Unionist Party, and was called despite angry nationalist protests. His Unionist opponents sense some dismay in the Trimble camp that they, rather than he, will benefit from it - "We're making Trimble tremble," one of his rivals gloated.

The results, to be declared tomorrow, may yet confound everyone, but it has to be said that most of the electoral surprises of the past have not been pleasant - not a single poll is remembered by the moderate centre as a success. Rather, it has been a story of a steady diminution of the middle ground.

Elections tend to expose the grim geology of Northern Ireland politics, with a smallish island layer of middle-ground moderation forever pressed between the tectonic plates of Unionism and nationalism. And Mr Paisley is always around to provide spectacular, and generally highly effective, vulcanism.

Countries like South Africa can find elections uplifting and even joyous occasions, but in Northern Ireland the prevailing sense is of the voters treading the polls to do their tribal duty, an exercise in keeping the other side out rather than



affirming a faith in democratic processes.

Unionists have traditionally liked elections, confident as they are that on a straight headcount they always win. But of late Unionist politicians complain that some of their people have become cynical and disillusioned with elections, and increasingly stay at home.

Nationalists, by contrast, have become increasingly organised, with both Sinn Fein and John Hume's Social Democratic and Labour Party building formidable machines. Two years ago, Mr Hume started Mr Paisley by almost matching his traditionally gigantic European vote; Sinn Fein, meanwhile, notches up the highest percentage vote of any party in Belfast city council. The tectonic plates move slowly, but they do move.

The history of elections reflects the history of the Troubles: the 1969 victory for Bernadette

Devlin, which showed nationalists could win elections; the meteoric rise of Mr Paisley, who captured a Westminster seat in 1970 and has held it since; the fragmentation of Unionism; the rise of Sinn Fein as an electoral force in the early 1980s. Soberingly, there have been two by-elections resulting from the murders of politicians.

But very often the real focus of events has lain elsewhere - in Anglo-Irish talks and, most of all, in the back streets' terrorist war. Elections themselves have made no apparent contribution to banishing the gunmen.

But this time there could yet be a happy ending. Once the election is out of the way some way might be found of reassuring republicans that the talks will be for real, and not simply about IRA arms de-commissioning. There might then be another ceasefire.

Sean O'Callaghan, page 19

Frail peace may now be lost forever

PATRICK COCKBURN
Jerusalem

The Israeli election campaign started when Yigal Amir fired his pistol into the back of Yitzhak Rabin, the Israeli prime minister, six months ago. Shimon Peres, who succeeded him, could have called an election then and won it. He decided to wait. He expected the situation to become calmer.

Instead it grew worse. Since last November there has been a shocking act of violence almost every month. In February and March suicide bombs killed 63 people in Israel and in April almost 200 people died in Israel's bombardment of Lebanon.

Will the election yesterday end the cycle of violence? It has been presented in simple terms: on the left Shimon Peres, the architect of the Oslo accords, committed to continuing the peace process. On the right Benjamin Netanyahu, his rival from the Likud party, intent on smothering any agreement with the Palestinians by expanding Israeli settlements.

It is not that simple. While it has been a tight race between Mr Peres and Mr Netanyahu, it has been clear for weeks that the centre-left coalition committed to negotiations with the

Palestinians, which won the election in 1992, would not get a majority this time around.

This happens at a time when negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians have reached a critical phase. Most Israelis wanted to pull out of the slums of Gaza and the Palestinian towns of the West Bank. But next month talks are to begin on Jerusalem, Israeli settlements and frontiers. These are issues which deeply divide Israelis. It is not likely that any government which emerges from this election will offer terms that the Palestinians can accept.

As a real political process, Oslo is already dead. The "peace process" has become a slogan without substance. It was always vulnerable because it was drawn out over such a long period and could always be derailed by a bomb. But what truly doomed it was that neither side has got much out of it on the street.

Israelis may say that Yasser Arafat, the Palestinian leader, is lucky to have got anything. The balance of power in the region is against him. He has no military option. The US has abandoned its former mediating role for uncritical support of Israel and Mr Peres.

TURN TO PAGE 2

XERYUS ROUGE
POUR HOMME



GIVENC

QUICKLY

Lyrical approach
A new set of non-jingoistic lyrics has been commissioned to accompany Beethoven's 'Ode To Joy', the BBC's theme music for Euro 96. Page 3

Men of conscience
Oxford University's women students get fewer top-class degrees than men, possibly because they are more conscientious. Page 5

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Cabinet rivals fight for Koreans

COLIN BROWN
Chief Political Correspondent

The rivalry between two British Cabinet ministers last night was claimed to be putting at risk plans by a Korean company to invest £1bn in a microchip plant in Britain, creating 4,000 new jobs.

Posturing by William Hague, Secretary of State for Wales, and Michael Forsyth, Secretary of State for Scotland, is alleged to have delayed a decision by LG International (formerly Lucky Goldstar) on investment in a new semi-conductor plant.

Mr Hague, on the wet wing of the Tory party, has been trying to entice the company to invest in Wales. Mr Forsyth, a Thatcherite ring-winger, was yesterday using his rival charms in Korea to persuade the investors to plump for Scotland.

There is some political posturing going on which is getting in the way of the question of LG's inward investment in the UK, a source close to the project said.

The stakes were raised two weeks ago when it was reported on the BBC that LG had decided to site their proposed plant in Wales. That was seen by the source as a "politically motivated" leak. The source said there were "unhelpful" signs of tension between the rivals.

The company has not been in touch with either the Welsh Development Agency or Scottish Enterprise since the BBC report, although a decision was expected a month ago.

Mr Forsyth has been in the Far East since last week, when he secured two Japanese business investment schemes offering 200 jobs in Scotland. He was able to clinch a deal for investment by another Korean industrial group, Shin Ho Tech, to build a £9m computer monitor assembly plant in Scotland. Announcing the deal, Mr Forsyth appeared to fire a shot across Mr Hague's bow. He said he was "determined" that it would be followed by other Korean firms.

However, Mr Hague and Mr Forsyth may fight each other to a draw. There were reports that LG may split their plans with a microchip plant in Scotland and a manufacturing and assembly plant in Wales.



Keeping the faith: Latter-day mods recapture glory days in Brighton for The Who's production of *Quadrophenia* to be performed at a Hyde Park concert in June

Photograph: Edward Sykes

Brighton rocks as vintage Vespas hit the seafront

NIC CICUTTI

It could be 1966. But this was Brighton sea-front yesterday, the air filled with raucous engines and the heady smell of Castrol and Silkolene.

Dozens of vintage Vespas and Lambrettas were in the south-coast resort revisiting the scene of the pitched battles between mods and rockers which inspired Pete Townshend's *Quadrophenia*, the rock opera which will be performed next month at a huge open air concert in Hyde Park, London.

The remnants of The Who will recreate the 1960s with scenes filmed yesterday in Brighton as the backdrop. Sporting high aerials and scores of chromed wing-mirrors and headlamps, the scooters rode in tight, formation through the

town, drawing puzzled stares. The park-clad riders came from scooter clubs throughout the south of England, and were assembled by the Vespa Club of Britain.

This summer, scooters are back. With today's new two-wheelers, being cool is easy. Ask Oasis, Blur's Damon Albarn or Bono of U2, all proud - if slightly wobbly - owners of Italjet Velociferos, the latest 600-cc retro Italian machines. Paul Weller, however, now the grandfather of the mod scene despite being a mere 30-something, insists on a Lambretta.

Quadrophenia, the story of Jimmy, the mod with a multiple-personality disorder, will be played live to a sell-out crowd in London at the end of June. The Who are reforming to play the one-off concert in aid

of the Prince's Trust. On giant screens above the Hyde Park audience scenes of vintage Vespas and Lambrettas being ridden along the Brighton sea-front will help tell Jimmy's story.

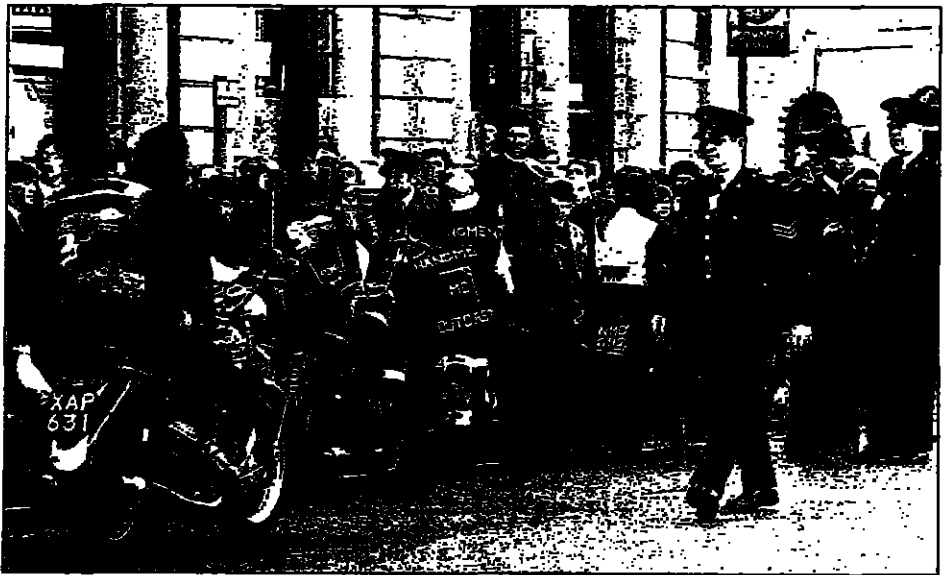
On the same bill as Pete Townsend and Roger Daltrey, though not appearing in *Quadrophenia*, will be Eric Clapton and Bob Dylan. Quite what Dylan, the old croaker, would make of today's scooter scene is impossible to guess. But for thousands of old Vespa and Lambretta owners, singing along nostalgically to *Bell Boy*, the days when you could buy a classy suit for £40, head down to Brighton for a long weekend and throw deckchairs at a rocker will be fondly remembered.

Quadrophenia - the 1979 film of the rock opera, starring Sting - sparked massive re-

newed interest in the scooter scene. By 1986 up to 15,000 scooterists would congregate in Brighton, Scarborough, Weston-super-Mare and Skegness every bank-holiday weekend.

As with London's debutantes, scooterists had their Season too. From Easter until late-September, the arrival of scooterboys and girls in army greens, and mods in their tonic suits, loafers and parkas could cause shops to be boarded up, pubs to shut down and camp sites to empty.

But for a new generation of scooter riders, captivated by Martha Reeves and the Vandellas or the latest techno sound, *Quadrophenia* says being sharp on two wheels is back in style. "Keeping the Faith", as they used to say, has never been easier.



The way they were: Mods and rockers, watched by police, meet in Folkestone in 1969

Who us? Plane fracas is kicked into touch

STEVE BOGGAN

The Football Association reacted with scepticism yesterday to claims by Cathay Pacific that something so hard as a television screen could have been damaged by the boot of an England player.

While the airline submitted a £5,000 bill for two such screens smashed during the team's flight home from Hong Kong, the FA expressed astonishment at the thought that drunken players could have been responsible.

The England manager Terry Venables promised a full inquiry yesterday, but not before MPs had called for those responsible to be kicked out of the squad before the start of next month's Euro 96 championships.

According to early reports, the two screens, measuring 6m square and located in seat armrests, were damaged at the end of a drinking and card-playing session in the upstairs "bubble" section of the Cathay Pacific Boeing 747 during the flight home on Tuesday morning. A table was also reported to have been broken.

Inevitably, the first man accused of causing the damage was Paul Gascoigne, who was known to have been celebrating



his 29th birthday. A high spirited Gascoigne later apologised for upsetting a stewardess after an altercation.

Neither the FA nor Cathay Pacific would name Gascoigne as the culprit. His agent, Mel Stein, said Gascoigne would not comment.

The airline reported the damage to Scotland Yard, which promised to conduct an investigation, and yesterday the FA was shown a bill for £5,000.

Russell Stenhouse, spokesman for Cathay Pacific, said: "It will cost us that much to repair the damage. We waited for about eight hours after

the plane landed so we could report the incident to the police and get engineers on board. They examined the damage and established that it had not been caused accidentally. It was done with intent."

The FA sought to play down the fracas yesterday and promised that Venables would carry out "face to face" interviews with the players before taking action. Despite evidence relating to the damage, it issued said: "The Football Association is very concerned by some exaggerated media comments today in connection with the behaviour of the England team on its return journey."

"At this stage it is by no means clear who was responsible. Then, whatever action is needed will be taken."

It seems likely that Venables will resist calls to suspend those responsible, particularly because the UEFA deadline for replacing players passed yesterday. However, that did not stop a number of MPs calling for them to be punished.

John Carlisle, vice-chairman of the Conservative Party's backbench sports committee, said: "This has happened at a time when obviously we are worried about what is going to happen over the next few weeks

when the competition gets under way. It sets a terrible example. The culprits should be identified, publicly exposed and thrown out of the squad at once. And if that includes Paul Gascoigne, then so be it."

Venables is not likely to conduct his interviews until next week, by which time much of the furore may have died down.

Residents in the North-east of England were invited to "shop a job" last night with the publication of about 100 photographs of unidentified suspected soccer hooligans, writes Jason Bennetto.

The pictures in the Newcastle *Evening Chronicle* were from security videos of crowds running amok in the centre of Newcastle following the failure of the city's team to win the Premier League earlier this month.

As part of a clampdown on football violence in the run up to Euro 96 the police have launched a wide ranging operation to identify and prosecute the Newcastle hooligans.

The pictures, some of which will also be shown on regional television, show faces in sharp detail. As well as spreading the pictures across two pages, the *Evening Chronicle* urges its readers to "Shop A Job".

Jim White, page 19

Beethoven loses after extra rhyme

DAVID LISTER

As John Major marches with a new boldness against Europe, the BBC is trying to hold Europe together by commissioning strictly non-jingoistic words to accompany the theme music for its coverage of Euro 96.

The Corporation is already facing criticism for choosing a German, well Beethoven, and his "Ode To Joy" from the Ninth Symphony, as the anthem for the European football championships. It has now commissioned a new translation of the German words which is "non-jingoistic and broad-based".

The words to be sung on tele-

vision every night to Beethoven's Ninth Symphony have been obtained by the *Independent* and are in the best Eurofile traditions.

John Willan, head of music at BBC Worldwide, commissioned the translation from a journalist, who does not want to

be named, after deciding the original words by Schiller sounded stilted and were inappropriate for a football programme. Schiller's verses talk of "daughters of Elysium", a phrase which may not roll trippingly off the tongues of supporters at Wembley.

"Ode To Joy", Euro 96 style

Sing a song of joy and freedom, sing a song of brotherhood/Stand and cheer and lift your spirit, feel as proud as heroes should/Glorious nations, celebrations, join an ode to joy and peace/Sing with passion, sing with feeling, match the best that others could.

Sing a song of understanding, sing an anthem to the free/Sing a song which has no ending, revel in its poetry/Glorious nations, celebrations, join an ode to joy and peace/Mighty voices ring triumphant round the world in unity.

Mr Willan gave the writer two translations - one of the original Schiller and one a bowdlerised version done by Sir Harry Secombe some years ago. The writer's brief was to adapt them into "non-jingoistic and broad-based verses which relate to the euphoria surrounding a pan-European event".

Mr Willan said yesterday that those making a fuss about the use of Beethoven as a theme for Euro 96 had forgotten that the Ninth Symphony was originally commissioned by the Royal Philharmonic Society.

The new words are sung by the BBC Symphony Orchestra with the music being played by the BBC Concert Orchestra.

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A black and white photograph of a Smith & Wesson Model 10 revolver, showing the barrel, cylinder, and handle. The revolver is oriented horizontally, with the barrel pointing to the left. The cylinder has five visible chambers. The handle is dark and textured. The image is framed by a thin black border.

Oxford d
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A grainy, black and white photograph showing a group of people standing on the steps of a building. A car is visible on the left side of the frame. The image is heavily degraded with noise and artifacts, making details difficult to discern. The scene appears to be outdoors, possibly a public building or a government office, given the formal attire of some individuals. The car on the left is partially visible, showing its front end. The building has a series of steps leading up to it, and several people are standing on these steps. One person is standing on the ground to the left of the steps. The overall quality is poor, with significant vertical banding and horizontal streaks throughout the image.



In front of him, where only minutes earlier there had been 27 eager, happy five- and six-year-olds and three adults ready to teach them, there were 11 murdered bodies and a class of injured and terrified survivors.

Nine bullets were fired at the Portacabin classroom of primary seven. Some bullets passed straight through the classroom walls. Ch Supt Ogg said: "One of the bullets went through the back of a chair."

In such cases, a school should consider setting up a memorial or holding a special assembly.

David Hart, General Secretary of the NAHT, said that more funding was needed to improve school provision.

Television 'intrusive' on grief

In such cases, a school should consider setting up a memorial or holding a special assembly.

David Hart, General Secretary of the NAHT, said that more funding was needed to improve schools and to

"We can find hundreds of millions [of pounds] to compensate beef farmers, but when it comes to urgent funding for school security the Government doesn't seem willing to act."

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RAC

As university's results continue to show men achieving more firsts, expert is called in to examine disparity. Louise Jury reports

Oxford debates why women are still second best

Statistics which show Oxford University's women students get fewer top-class degrees than the men may beg the question - what is a first-class brain?

Ruth Deech, the principal of St Anne's College, said yesterday that the university may have to examine what it is rewarding when it awards a first-class degree.

As Dr Margaret Spear, an educational researcher, arrived at the university this month to begin a 10-month investigation into women's relative underachievement, the reasons were being fiercely debated.

Mrs Deech, who came to Oxford as a student 30 years ago and stayed, said the women's methodical approach to finals might be militating against them.

"It appears women are much more conscientious, very careful to get their facts right and present the arguments beautifully. Men will have a brave go at a brand new theory, it may be a question of style. Which should we be rewarding?"

Although women gain fewer firsts than men - 14 per cent compared with 23 per cent - higher proportion gain 2:1s and fewer female students get thirds.

Standards have improved in the past 20 years, but the increase in women getting firsts has been smaller than the dramatic improvement in men's results.

At most other universities, apart from Cambridge where female students have a similar experience to their counterparts at Oxford, women's performance is similar to men's although they still achieve fewer firsts.

Dr Margaret Spear is to examine possible causes including Oxford's one-to-one tutorial teaching and the highly pressurised examinations which assess the degree in intensive three-hour papers at the end of the final year.

Mrs Deech said she thought the stress of finals might contribute. Her experience was that the cleverest women undergraduates reacted badly to the pressure created by the expectation of success.

And Derek Wood QC, principal of the former women's college St Hugh's, pointed out women 20 years ago had to be brilliant because there were only five women's colleges compared with five times that number reserved for the opposite sex.

He saw "nothing to choose" between men and women as they went through their courses. "You can't see the women struggling against the men. But it does seem that a higher proportion of women don't do themselves justice in finals."

Both heads dismissed claims that the disappearance of the single sex colleges was to blame. Most went mixed partly because

they were failing to attract the best students.

Undergraduates outside the English faculty yesterday had their own theories.

"The teaching staff is very male, Oxford is a male domain. Two of my tutors are blatantly misogynist," said one 23-year-old finalist.

A first-year, aged 19, said most tutors tried not to be sexist but were "vaguely men-lightened" without realising it. "And one thing you do twig very quickly is women are in the minority."

About 44 per cent of undergraduates are female but fewer than seven per cent of the professors are. As a first is now almost obligatory to win postgraduate funding, Oxford women's failure to win them reduces their chances of becoming academics.

Joanna Limes, who chairs the university's equal opportunities committee, said they needed to narrow down the current ideas about what was wrong.

And Dr Spear, who has previously investigated gender differences in schools, said she hoped to be practical. "I think it is most productive to concentrate on factors where there is a possibility of bringing about change."

Sally Copley, vice president (women) of the students' union, welcomed the investigation - "although appointing a researcher and acting on the



Final analysis: Students filing in for exams at Oxford. Some believe the severe pressure may affect women's results

Photograph: Brian Hams

results are quite different things."

But there were also words of reassurance for women. Mrs Deech said she believed they often gained more from their time at Oxford than men. "Far too many men spend their university careers having a beer and playing football while women do drama and teach orphans in Romania," she said. "I always say you should look at people when they are 25 or 30. There is more to life than just getting a first."

Dorrell pledges more beds and nurses for sick children

LIZ HUNT
Health Editor

The Government yesterday unveiled plans to reduce the numbers of seriously sick children being turned away from hospital each winter.

An extra 30 paediatric intensive care beds and more specialist nurses to staff them have been promised by the end of the year. A new bed location service to help doctors find the nearest available paediatric intensive care bed as fast as possible is also planned in time for the peak winter period when suspected meningitis cases and chest infections place extra burden on an over-stretched service.

An additional £2m was allocated for more specialist nurses - six are required for each intensive care bed, which costs £250,000 a year to run - and to improve "retrieval" services for moving very sick

children to their nearest specialist unit.

Overall the number of beds nationally is to be increased by more than 20 per cent over the next four years with 37 new general and specialist intensive care beds, and 18 high dependency beds. There are currently 196 general and specialist intensive care beds and 53 high dependency beds in England.

Announcing details of the five-point plan, Stephen Dorrell, Secretary of State for Health, said that 37 of the new beds will be provided within two years. Asked if the extra beds would mean children would no longer be turned away, Mr Dorrell said the announcement would offer a "better assurance" of care.

Medical and nursing groups welcomed the news, but they said failure to provide new money for paediatric services would result in cuts elsewhere.

The Royal College of Nursing said it was a "positive ges-

ture" but in real terms would do little to alleviate a long-term crisis. It was doubtful that enough specialist staff - usually cited by hospitals as the biggest barrier to opening new paediatric intensive care beds - could be found to run the new beds in the short-term. "There is no pool of trained staff waiting to be employed that we are aware of," a spokesman said.

Harriet Harman, Labour's health spokeswoman, accused the Government of "shirking its responsibility" by refusing to tell hospitals how they are to meet the costs of the new beds.

Hundreds of children in need of an intensive care bed had to be turned away from major hospitals in England last winter, prompting widespread criticism of Government policy from doctors and patient's groups.

The crisis peaked with the death of 10-year-old Nicholas Geldard. He suffered a brain haemorrhage at home in Stock-

port, Cheshire, in December, and was ferried, already brain dead, to Leeds after hospitals in Liverpool, Manchester and Sheffield turned him away.

Following the publication of the Geldard inquiry in March, Mr Dorrell ordered a report into paediatric intensive care by the NHS Executive. That report, published yesterday, after discussions with health authorities and trusts, concluded that more beds, specialist staff and greater flexibility are needed.

Mr Dorrell said that paediatric intensive care was "part of the base commitment of the NHS" and it was a matter of "resource allocations and choices" by individual trusts to determine how they would provide the extra beds. The NHS could not afford over-provision of beds - the annual cost of a bed is equivalent to 20 heart valve operations - but must be able to meet the peaks and troughs of demand, he said.

Move to split Law Society's roles

PATRICIA WYNN DAVIES
Legal Affairs Editor

Moves to break up the Law Society and give its representative functions to a body run by high street solicitors are to be put to a vote at the profession's annual general meeting next month.

The decision to throw down the gauntlet to the establishment based at Chancery Lane, central London, is the latest manifestation of the grassroots discontent that propelled Martin Mears, the society's anti-es-

tablishment president, into office last summer.

Motions about to be tabled by the fledgling Solicitors' Association for the July meeting will urge the society to follow the example of the medical profession's General Medical Council and British Medical Association, under which regulatory and professional interests are separated. They make clear the association's intention to seek to remove the entire ruling council of the society from office in order to achieve this.

The initiative has been pioneered by John Edge, a Bournemouth solicitor and the association's founder, and steering group member Anthony Bogan, who was elected to the society's ruling council last year.

The association has been campaigning for an end to predatory pricing in conveyancing and an end to the conflict between the Law Society's regulatory functions and the survival of small firms.

A division of responsibilities, leaving the society responsible

for training, admission and conduct while giving the association the "trade union" function, could be brought about by amending the society's charter at the AGM. But that would require a two-thirds majority at the meeting and within the council.

While the council would be expected to veto such a move, the association has been advised by Michael Beloff QC that it is possible to amend the society's by-laws to permit it to end the term of office of all or any of the council members.

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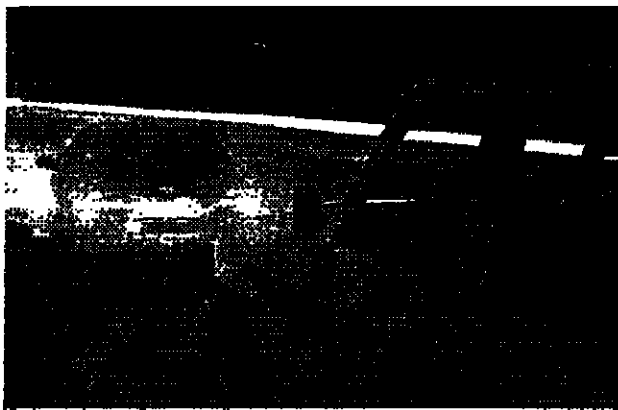
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دعواتكم الى

Le Shuttle's £49 fare starts price war in Channel

CHRISTIAN WOLMAR
Transport Correspondent

The long-expected price war for crossing the Channel finally broke out yesterday with Eurotunnel announcing that its main return fare was being halved to £129. Five-day trips have been reduced to as low as £49 and other fares have also been slashed from 1 June.

The largest two ferry companies, P & O and Stena, immediately announced that they would be matching the cuts, even though their brochure prices are currently around double Eurotunnel's new fare.

Eurotunnel operates the Le Shuttle "turn up and go" service on its trains and is desperate to increase its current 40 per cent share of the market in order to

stave off bankruptcy.

The peak-period daytime fare for people going abroad for

more than five days which is the key revenue earner for all the cross-Channel companies has been reduced by Eurotunnel from £266 to £129, putting at risk the profitability of any of the operations. While the ferry companies will not be changing their brochures, any passenger who says when booking with a ferry that they can obtain a cheaper fare from Eurotunnel will be offered a matching price.

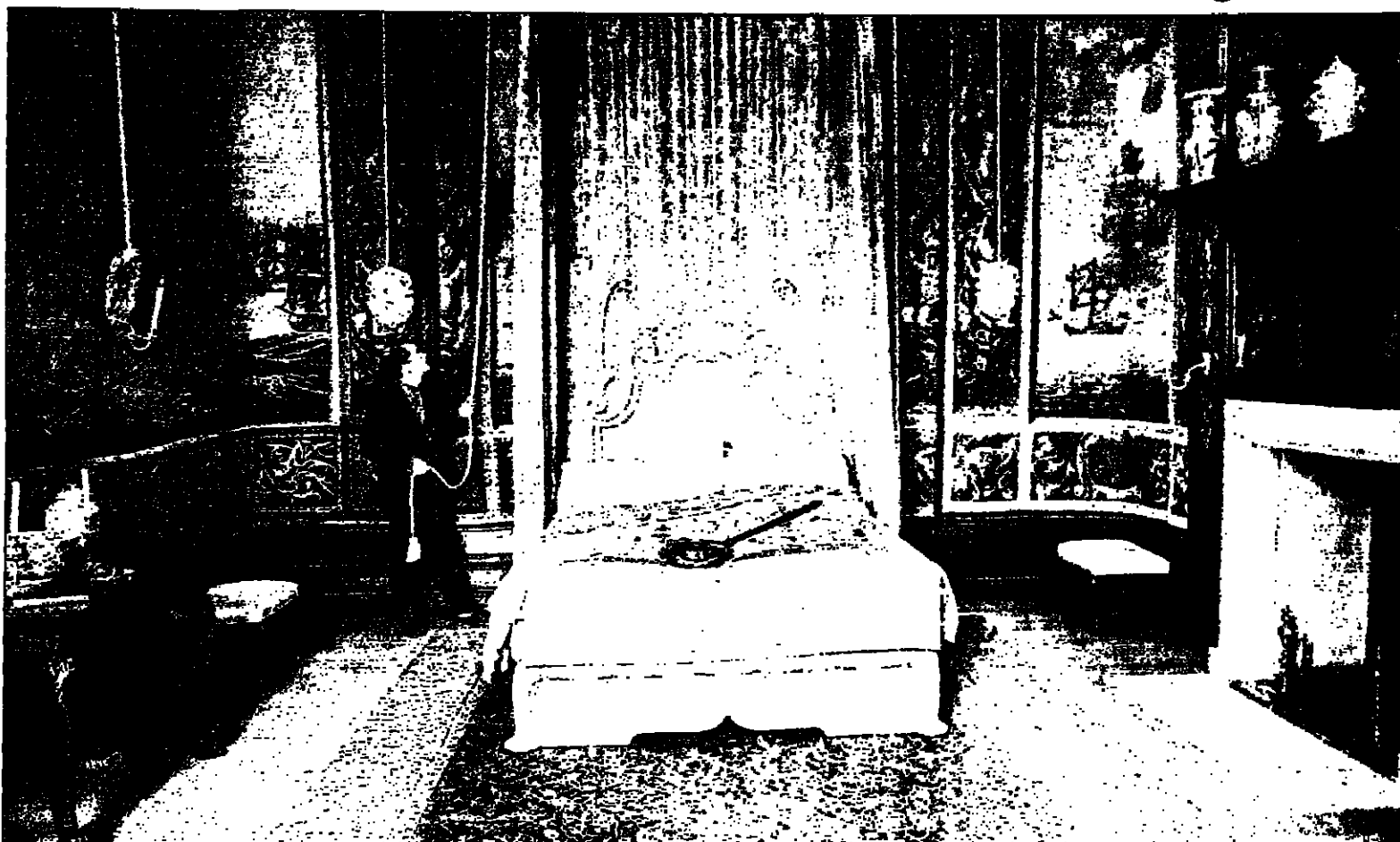
While simplifying its overall fares structure to give just night-time and daytime rates, Eurotunnel has launched a new Apex fare of £99 for people booking at least two weeks in advance travelling between 15 June and 15 July and a club fare aimed at business travellers who will get priority in the queues, and goodies such as a newspaper and coffee.

The ferry companies responded to the price cuts by ac-

curring Eurotunnel of using its parlous financial state to its advantage. Steve Lawrence, spokesman for Sea Containers which owns Hoverspeed, said: "Eurotunnel are effectively bankrupt and they are doing this just to maximise revenue. They are not paying interest on their massive debt and this gives them a completely unfair advantage."

The ferry operators' anger is heightened by the fact that Eurotunnel managers had long stressed that they would not enter into a price war. They argued that it would be counter-productive but now, asked to justify it, a spokesman for the company said: "We've been operating for over a year and we've found out what our customers want. They want a simple fares structure." The company is also retaining its policy of very low prices for duty free goods, again squeezing the ferries' profits.

Royal secret: Restorers at Hampton Court find device for excluding courtiers



Bedside tale: Dr Simon Thurley tests the system of pulleys and lock (below) used by George II to exclude courtiers

Photographs: John Voos

Sadness of King George at lack of private rooms

MARIANNE MACDONALD
Arts Correspondent

The average Briton today may get little privacy, but our problems are nothing compared to the difficulty George II had in getting a bit of peace and quiet with his Queen Caroline.

Life at Hampton Court involved constant interruption. Even in the Royal bedroom. For although George II could lock the door, his leading courtiers — the equivalent of the Prime Minister, the Lord Chief Justice, the Archbishop of Canterbury — all had keys. They could, and did, walk in unannounced.

But George II dreamed up a solution, which although known about at the time, has only now been rediscovered as a result of the restoration of the palace following the 1986 fire.

Work recently began on the bedroom suites used by George II before his death in 1760. As

the tapestries were stripped in the Georgian Rooms — what had been Queen Caroline's bedroom — experts were surprised to notice a knob of brass on the door frame and a system of pulleys round the room.

"We thought, 'This is really weird'," said Dr Simon Thurley, curator of the Historic Royal Palaces. "We lined up the pulleys and we realised they led down to this strange brass thing."

Mystified as to what the pulleys were for, the curators consulted the experts for ideas. But they drew a blank until somebody mentioned a similar gadget used by Queen Victoria at Osborne House, in the Isle of Wight, to lock herself inside her bedroom.

"It dawned on us that this thing at Hampton Court could be similar. So we ran a wire round the pulleys and put it down to the brass thing on the

door frame, put on a big tassel, and it worked," said Dr Thurley.

It was an extraordinary discovery, for it revealed as few others have in recent years how difficult the Royals of past centuries found it to be alone.

This was where the King and Queen went to be alone in the days when taking a bath or going to the lavatory was a ceremonial event attended by the Groom of the Stool.

It is the first time the palace has announced its discovery, which will be told in full at 8.30pm tonight in *One Foot In The Past* on BBC2.

"This bit of surviving technology gives one a little window into how the kings and queens who lived at the palace had to struggle to keep themselves private," said Dr Thurley. And apparently it worked. For the record, George and Caroline had eight children.

The Channel price wars: How much does the trip cost?

	All fares are return for car and up to 5 people		P&O	Hoverspeed	Stena
	Le Shuttle	New Old			
Daytime Standard	£129	£266	£225-273*	£218-328	£214*
	(£109 nights)				(£98 on selected sailings)
5-day return	£69	£147	£99	£109-164	£114*
	(£49 nights)				
Day trip	£59	£75	£16 + £1 per passenger until 30 June	£89	£16 + £1 per extra passenger
			£23 + £4 from 1 July		

* Price pledge guarantee to match rival's fares

Student fined for OJ tape sale

ROS WYNNE-JONES

The Oxford Union has fined and suspended a student who recorded OJ Simpson's controversial speech to the society and sold it to national newspapers.

Chris Philp, a second-year student at University College,

was fined £50 for selling a written transcript of the OJ Simpson debate and helping to sell an audio cassette to TV stations.

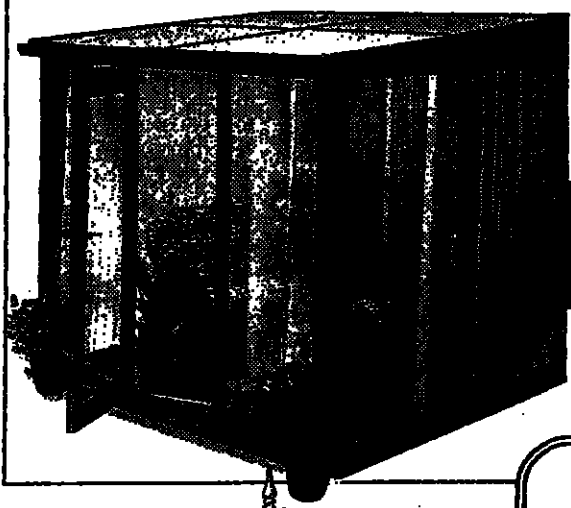
Mr Philp, a former committee member of the union and features editor of the student magazine *Cherwell*, admitted both offences to the union's standing committee.

The union president, Paul Kenward, said: "This shows that the union is not prepared to allow people to record meetings when they are told it is against the rules." The Oxford Union had given Mr Simpson an assurance that there would be no broadcast media at the union debate a fortnight ago.

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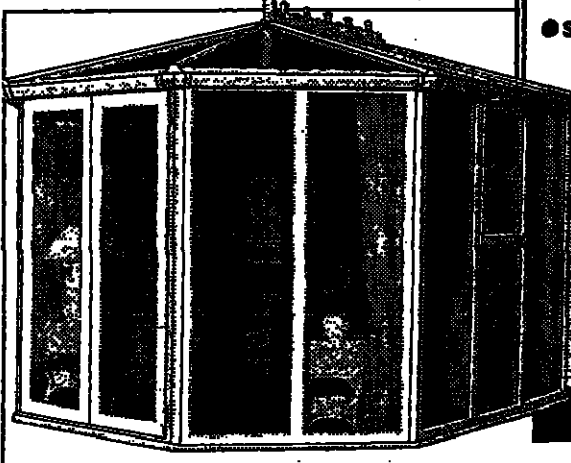
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news

Head teachers' conference: Blunkett outlines plans to shun 'progressive' education for a return to the traditional methods

Labour goes back to basics on teaching

FRAN ABRAMS
Education Correspondent

Primary schools would go back to traditional teaching methods under a Labour government, the party's education spokesman will tell head teachers today.

Spelling out a radical reform which will sound more like the Conservative policies of the past than those of Labour, David Blunkett will advocate setting by ability, whole class teaching and the old-fashioned "phonics" method of teaching reading. Group work and the idea that children can learn to read simply through contact with books would be frowned, he will say. The National Curriculum would be slimmed down so that children would concentrate on the "3Rs" and social skills.

Mr Blunkett will tell the National Association of Head Teachers' conference in Torquay that schools have gone too far in embracing progressive teaching methods — a view for-



David Blunkett: Plans to set up a literacy task force

merly held mainly by right-wingers.

As a result, too many children are leaving primary school unable to read, write and add up. In future schools may have to meet annual targets on pupils' progress.

Giving further details of the plan in an article in today's *New Statesman and Society* magazine he will say that teachers are not

being taught to teach reading, writing and arithmetic properly, or to maintain discipline.

"Teaching needs to be not on one ideological way forward, but on the basis that imaginative phonics does actually deliver better than leaving children to flounder. Children need to be taught how to read in a formal, constructive manner," he says.

Mr Blunkett will announce the formation of a new task force on literacy, to be chaired by Professor Michael Barber, of London University's Institute of Education. The group will draw up guidelines on teaching methods which would be issued to schools in the early days of a Labour government.

The Labour Party's aim is for every 11-year-old child to have a reading age at least equal with his or her chronological age within 10 years. It will introduce testing for five year-olds and continuous assessment throughout the primary years in order to achieve targets to be set by the school year beginning in

September 1998 would be designated the "National Year of Reading".

Mr Blunkett will praise a scheme already set up by the Labour London borough of Barking and Dagenham, which teaches maths using the whole class methods already common in Switzerland, Germany and the Netherlands. The traditional methods used in the experiment have proved far more successful than more modern ones used in many schools, he will say.

Most primary schools use a mixture of whole class teaching and group work as well as teaching reading both through the traditional phonics approach and by introducing children to books.

David Hart, general secretary of the NAHT, said Mr Blunkett's drive must be matched by extra funding.

"He is going to have to produce a carrot as well as a stick. If he doesn't, then his message is in grave danger of falling on stony ground," he said.



School days: Pupils at work in a London primary school. A new study says class size can affect their behaviour. Photograph: Gerard Lewis

Large classes 'are damaging pupils' progress'

FRAN ABRAMS

Pupils' progress is being damaged by large classes, according to new research published yesterday.

The finding contradicts a recent report by the school inspection body, Ofsted, which says the quality of teaching is more important than the number of children in the classroom.

Academics from the University of Nottingham say that smaller classes are needed for all age groups, but Ofsted argues that class size is only important for infant pupils.

The authors of a report commissioned by the National Association of Head Teachers dismissed the inspectors' findings as invalid and unreliable.

Ofsted representatives were sent in to schools to look at the quality of education and not at class size, they said.

The research, led by Professor Christopher Day, said that large classes had an effect on pupils' behaviour and on the ability of schools to improve, as well as on teachers' workload and stress.

Classes of between 15 and 17 pupils led to higher standards and more positive attitudes to learning, particularly among pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds, Professor Day said.

The professor's report came

as government figures revealed that four out of 10 primary pupils were being taught in classes of more than 30 and that the numbers were rising.

Professor Day said more research was needed into the effects of large classes on children in this country.

He added: "Rising class size has an effect on the quality of opportunity for learning and it has a potentially damaging effect on the quality of teaching."

"I think there is too much weight given by the government to Ofsted reports which are about evaluating the quality of the school and not about investigating the effects of class size."

A spokeswoman for Ofsted said its research was reliable, and that it had been based on evaluations of 200,000 lessons.

"The inspection findings confirmed that the effectiveness of teaching has a more significant influence on pupils' achievements than class size alone," she said.

David Hart, general secretary of the NAHT, said that Ofsted should look again at its findings and that ministers should acknowledge that they were flawed.

"Pupils in smaller classes misbehave less, they participate more, they spend more time on tasks and they interrupt less," he said.

Call to shield snail sites from by-pass

CHRISTIAN WOLMAR

Pressure increased yesterday on the Government to ensure that the proposed Newbury by-pass does not damage a snail colony, following a recommendation from English Nature to declare part of the site a nature reserve.

At a meeting of its council earlier this month, English Nature, which advises the Government on wildlife matters, decided to recommend the Government to set up a "Special Area for Conservation" to protect two colonies of the tiny Desmoulin's whorl snail. This would mean that the site would be protected from development under European law.

Friends of the Earth says that two of the eight colonies of the snail on the floodplains of the rivers Kennet and Lambourn are affected by the by-pass route. The sites were protected when preparatory work was carried out earlier this

year to clear the path of the new road. The Department of the Environment is thought to be looking at ways of ensuring the road can be built without damaging the habitats before making an official announcement about English Nature's recommendation.

Alternatively, the Government could press ahead with the road irrespective of the damage caused to the habitats, by arguing that the construction is of national economic importance.

However, Tony Juniper, deputy campaigns director of Friends of the Earth, said that such a decision would be challenged in the European courts.

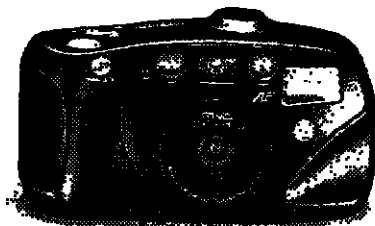
"If the Government had carried out a proper environmental impact assessment in the first place, it would not be in this ridiculous position now. The information now available on the snails should have been collected earlier and heard at the 1988 public inquiry into the scheme."

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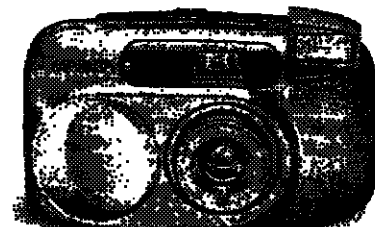
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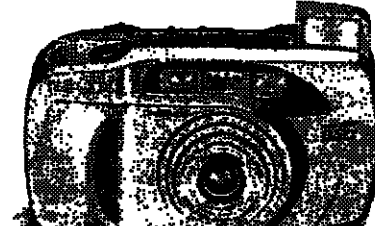
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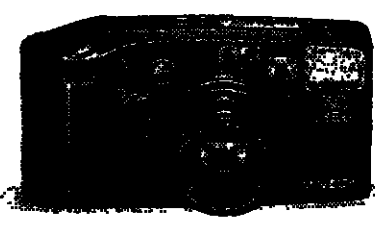
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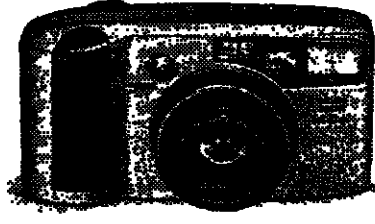
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High standards: Brian Blessed after returning from his third failed attempt on Everest Photograph: Edward Webb

Blessed launches bitter attack on 'human lemmings' of Everest

CHARLES ARTHUR

The highest point on earth is becoming the site for the lowest common denominator of human behaviour, said the actor Brian Blessed yesterday, after returning from his third unsuccessful attempt on Mount Everest.

He bitterly recounted tales of climbers using vacant tents as toilets, stealing the provisions needed by other teams, and acting "like human lemmings" in their desire to reach Everest's 29,028-ft summit.

Mr Blessed, 59, said at a press conference in London that the mountain "stank of death". "Sixty per cent of the people out there hadn't a clue what they were doing. They had [climbing] permits like taffeta, but no preparation - they were turning up with one tent and no [bottled] oxygen, hoping other people would help them out."

He railed at what he saw as the despoliation of the mountain, first climbed in 1953, which now sees hundreds of attempts

every year - often by inexperienced climbers who can afford the \$65,000 (£43,000) "peak fee". "The bodies were everywhere. An Austrian climber said to me, 'I don't accept that it's so dangerous up there'. I said, if you try to go up for four days without oxygen, in two days you will be a block of ice. And in two days he was."

He said that "summit fever"

But Mr Blessed's perspective of mountaineering behaviour was questioned yesterday by Tom Prentice, editor of *Climber* magazine. "When Edward Whymper was making the first ascent of the Matterhorn in July 1865, he and his partners threw rocks from the summit at the two Italians who were competing for the first ascent..."

"I'm not condoning such be-

Mr Blessed, a climber with 30 years' experience, was making his third attempt to climb the mountain without oxygen. In 1993 he was forced to turn back at 28,200ft. This time he was sent back by the expedition leader at 25,000ft when the weather worsened. "You have to obey the rules of the mountain," he said.

His expedition was being filmed by ITN for a Channel 4 programme to be shown later this year. The British climbers Alan Hinkes and Matt Dickinson, who was also filming the climb, did reach the top.

Mr Prentice said: "I think that for Brian Blessed to complain about tourists is absurd. It's people like him going there and making television programmes, generating publicity, who keep Everest in the forefront of people's minds when they think about mountains."

Mr Blessed claimed that this would be "the last pure film" about Everest, and that any future expedition would find the mountain ruined by visitors.

'Sixty per cent of the people hadn't a clue... the bodies were everywhere'

- the desire to reach the top - had overtaken some people's desire for self-preservation.

Mr Blessed also bemoaned plans for a hotel on the northern side of the mountain. "It will have the greatest view on God's earth, and then will come the fantastic railways and then pressurised suits so that tourists can go to the top. In the days of Mallory and Irvine, in the 1920s, it used to be a magic place."

behaviour, but I think Brian Blessed has an over-romantic view of mountaineering, said Mr Prentice. "The rubbish that gets left behind, the stealing of things - these are just a reflection of some of the problems that happen everywhere in society when you get a lot of people together. That's especially true in high-altitude mountaineering, which is stressful, both mentally and physically."

Doctors alarmed by cut in Aids funding

GLENDIA COOPER

Cuts in Aids and HIV funding in Britain could lead to a dramatic rise in cases, with the work done in containing the epidemic lost, the British Medical Association warned yesterday.

The Government's decision to impose a 7.7 per cent cut in funding for Aids treatment, care and prevention while case-loads are expected to go up by 5.9 per cent would wreck an area of the National Health Service which had been "dramatically successful", the BMA's chairman Dr Sandy Macara said, describing it as "Alice in Blunderland" thinking.

The cut of £10m comes at a time when new combination drug therapy is being introduced at an estimated cost of £15-20m per year. PACT [the National Association of providers of Aids care and treatment] said the effect would be to undermine the care of patients, create inequality in treatment, reduce the availability of proven therapies and the help given to those at highest risk, such as prostitutes.

Treatment of other sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) could also be threatened and more pressure created elsewhere in the health service, for example on doctors treating conditions associated with Aids, such as pneumonia.

Professor Anthony Pinching, chairman of PACT said yesterday: "I think there is a genuine risk that we will lose the containment [of Aids]." He said there were almost 20 million cases of HIV infection worldwide, and the epidemic was

growing. He said the funding cut had been worked out on the basis that the projected Aids case-load was not as bad as previously estimated. The current projection is that there will be 3,690 cases of people living with Aids by the end of 1996 compared with a previous estimate of 4,130, and about the same number with severe HIV disease.

Professor Pinching claimed the real workload was still increasing by between 6 and 12 per cent. "We are being asked to do more for less," he said. "We do not think it is possible."

Professor Michael Adler, an epidemiologist and member of PACT, added: "Services are going to have to be cut, compromised or scaled down."

The move would have a "very profound effect" on Britain's ability to control the spread of HIV infection, he warned. He said that in London, where there is a concentration of Aids care, two centres were not replacing staff as a result of the cuts. One had also made redundancies.

But the Department of Health challenged PACT's figures, insisting that according to latest figures numbers of people with Aids and severe HIV infection in England and Wales were projected to fall by 10.6 per cent in 1996, and 8.2 per cent in 1997.

"Our money is given on the basis of projected cases. That is sensible because it means money can be used for other services," a spokesman said. "We have provided £185m for the cost of treatment and care this year plus another £51m for prevention."

£35,000 for mother refused job share

A mother has won £35,000 because her employers refused to let her return to work on a part-time basis after the birth of her second child.

Sarah Rolls, 35, of Harpenden, Herts, resigned from IPC Magazines when the company would not let her work on a job-share basis.

Ms Rolls' claim was supported by the Equal Opportunities Commission and was settled on the first day of an industrial tribunal hearing, when IPC agreed to pay £35,000 in an out-of-court settlement.

Ms Rolls said it had been a "long hard slog" to get the settlement and added: "I only

hope that other people benefit from the action and IPC are not so arrogant in the future."

Ms Rolls said she had not taken the action for the money. "Long-term financial security far outweighs the short-term financial gain," she said. "It's been the principle. I would have preferred to stay in my career."

Ms Rolls worked for IPC for six years. She was advertising manager for *Essentials* and *Woman* and *Home* magazines when she left the company in September 1994. She took maternity leave for the birth of her first child and returned to work full-time. Ms Rolls took maternity leave for her second child but decided she could not combine full-time work with her role as a mother of two and asked to return to work on a part-time, work-share basis.

Kamlesh Bahl, chairwoman of the Equal Opportunities Commission, said high-quality part-time work was the best way for many women to combine a career with motherhood.

She added: "The commission would like part-time and job-sharing to be made more accessible to women and men in management and senior posts."

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Pluggers fall to bottom of pop chart

DAVID LISTER

If pluggers succeed, however, they will meet with a

Crazy or not, the pluggers may not be the only ones to be unsettled by the wind of change. Radio 1's managing editor Andy Parfitt said: "We are using the move to do a lot of things

Artist's impression: Philip Hook, an expert in Impressionist and modern art, shows off paintings by Picasso, Miro and Chagall, whose works are among the 392 paintings and sculptures to be sold by Sotheby's on 24 and 25 June: the auction house expects the sale to be its most successful for six years Photograph: Nicholas Turpin

Hidden letters shed light on the lady of the lamp

MARIANNE MACDONALD
Arts Correspondent

in which the bones
kings were put. To
[redacted]
incubator [redacted]
[redacted] [redacted]

Sunday Day.
Dear Aunt Bessie
Mother and

Above: One of the cache of letters written by the young Florence Nightingale (left) which form part of the Clough Nightingale archive to be auctioned next month. Total estimate is £120,000 to £150,000

5, and his son Frederick, aged 7, and their governess, Miss Salisbury," she confides to her Aunt Patty. "Laura's ankles are so weak, that she is not allowed to walk about, though she can."

Florence's precision of character is also evident in a letter, estimated at up to £3,000, to her cousin Hilary Bonham Carter.

"Miss Christie (who perhaps you do not know) sends her love, & desires [sic] to be remembered to Miss Heath.... Aunt

Patty says, that if she had not been ill, she would have written to you, for she loves you very much... Miss Christie says that Miss Heath is your governess, but I say that Aunt Patty is...

Later letters come from Florence in the Crimea. One estimated at up to £600, asks a relation to tell a Reverend Mother that "poor Sister Winifred died on Saturday of Cholera after a few hours at the general hospital here - that

British stars fail to top Hollywood bill

MARIANNE MACDONALD

Last year Daniel Day Lewis and Sean Connery were among the top 25 actors listed in *Premier* magazine, but this year they are conspicuous by their absence - as are Emma Thompson, Jeremy Irons, Jack Nicholson and Hugh Grant.

The list continues with Mel Gibson, Kevin Costner, Robin Williams, Brad Pitt, Harrison Ford, Clint Eastwood and Arnold Schwarzenegger. Women make their first appearance at number 15 with Julia Roberts

There is also disappointment for Ralph Fiennes, tipped for Hollywood stardom, Gary Oldman and Tim Roth, not to mention Kenneth Branagh.

UK edition of *Premiere*, said yesterday that the ranking was done by the American edition of the magazine on the basis of box office takings, ability to ensure a film had a big opening weekend in the United States and the ability to get a film made by agreeing to star.

Christopher Middleton was born in 1928. He read French and German at the universities of London and the United States. An outstanding poet and novelist, his poetry, and poetry, his own first collection, published in 1962 and was awarded the Pulitzer Prize. *Intimate Chronicle* published today by Carcanet

born in 1926 in Truro, Cornwall, Oxford and subsequently taught in Zurich, emigrating in 1965 as a leading translator of German prose. His *Translation Torse 3: Poems 1949-61* was edited by the Geoffrey Faber Memorial Trust, in which this poem appears, is £8.95.

DAILY POEM

Catacomb

By Christopher Middleton

*I only want to hear the wind in the sycamore,
To such a height it grew in the garden
Of that hotel, crumbled long ago.
I only want to see under the door the thin
Triangle of light from a lamp that shone
Day and night, in the passage, burrushing the walls;
Cool they were to touch, with an odd slant, inward.*

*Though I call out your pretty names,
I am afraid you have begun to forget me.
Crooked creatures now, propped against
This other wall.*

And the creak
The window made when the wind blew;
Open window, that I want to hear.

*And to think any thought whatsoever,
Time just enough to imagine it was I who said:
All your theologies, all, are fragments
From Aphrodite's shattered mirror.*

Christopher Middleton was born in 1926 in Truro, Cornwall. He read French and German at Oxford and subsequently taught at the universities of London and Zurich, emigrating in 1965 to the United States. An outstanding translator of German prose and poetry, his own first collection *Torse 3: Poems 1949-61* was published in 1962 and was awarded the Geoffrey Faber Memorial Prize. *Intimate Chronicle*, in which this poem appears, is published today by Carcanet at £8.95.

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Israeli elections: Labour outrage as leading rabbis lobby at the last minute for Netanyahu

Peres in danger as right rides to polls on a high

PATRICK COCKBURN
Jerusalem

Supporters of Shimon Peres, the Israeli Prime Minister, were on edge yesterday as Israel went to the polls. "I am not sure, but I'm hoping," said Shlomi Moyal, his car plastered with blue-and-white stickers in support of Mr Peres, as he delivered voters to a polling station in Jerusalem.

He did not look confident. Cars, placards and stickers supporting Likud, or the right-wing and religious parties, are far more common than those in favour of Labour. "If we do not go forward we will go back," Mr Moyal said. "We will go back to the situation before Oslo." In other words, to the beginning of the peace process.

The Labour government has every reason to feel nervous. Overnight polls said Mr Peres had only a 2 to 3 per cent lead over Binyamin "Bibi" Netanyahu, the right-wing candidate. From early morning there were signs that the ultra-Orthodox were voting in large numbers. Cars were plastered with pictures of famous rabbis.

This is bad news for Mr Peres, although Jerusalem is a right-wing and religious city whose inhabitants are not typical of the other 4 million Israeli voters, most of whom live on the coastal plain. Nevertheless, in a tight race they may be decisive.

Mr Moyal, who looks after backward children, sounded beleaguered. He said: "For us Israelis it's very dangerous because I want the peace process to continue and I am afraid it might stop." At this point Mr Moyal's mobile phone rang and, after a brief conversation, he explained: "That was my brother. He supports Bibi and says he is going to win."

In the ultra-Orthodox stronghold of Mea She'arim, in the



Peres (above) and his right-wing rival Netanyahu during polling yesterday



heart of Jerusalem, there was intense interest in the election. A taxi hired by one of the religious parties to bring voters to the polls carried a huge poster saying: "Only Netanyahu is good for the Jews." This was denounced by Labour as a racist attack on Israeli-Arabs. Haim Ramon, Labour's campaign manager, warned them that if Mr Netanyahu won, "you will once again live as second-class citizens".

For weeks, Israeli politicians have focused on the wild cards of the Israeli election: ultra-Orthodox, Russian immigrants and Israeli Arabs. This is because the election is so evenly balanced between Mr Peres and Mr Netanyahu.

Going by previous elections, Labour will draw its support primarily from Ashkenazim - Jews who were born or whose fathers were born in Europe or America. In the last election in 1992 half Labour voters were Ashkenazim, a third Sephardim (from Asia and Africa) and the rest were second-generation Israelis. Likud draws two-thirds of its votes from the Sephardim.

Mr Netanyahu has tried to fight the election on "terror" and his recipe to end it. Labour tried to fight on the issues of "character", saying that Mr Netanyahu was not up to running Israel. It only intermittently capitalised on the assassination of its last leader, Yitzhak Rabin, at a peace rally in Tel Aviv six months ago.

In the last few weeks there have been signs that Mr Netanyahu has been making converts. "I am for Bibi because I think Peres is giving the country away," said a shop assistant in a non-kosher delicatessen. But he added that "my boss is for Peres, because he is worried that the ultra-Orthodox may take over Jerusalem and close down his shop."

The last-minute surge of support for Mr Netanyahu by influential rabbis has outraged the government. Fouad Ben Eliezer, the Housing Minister, said he had told the director-general of his ministry "to cease immediately all the construction work planned for the ultra-Orthodox". In the last six months Mr Peres has tried to keep the ultra-Orthodox neutral.

Interviewed just before the polls opened, Mr Peres said if he won he would continue negotiations with the Palestinians, see if progress was possible with Syria and try to establish diplomatic relations with another Arab country. Mr Peres also said he wanted "to begin co-operation with the US in the war on terror".



A religious Jew trudging through election propaganda in Jerusalem

Photograph: AP

SIGNIFICANT SHORTS

Seven years after the massacre in Tiananmen Square, a handful of brave individuals are still willing to try to stand up to the might of the Chinese government. But they still come up against the intolerance of a government which permits no dissent. Yesterday, it emerged that seven activists from Zhejiang, one of China's rich eastern provinces, had sent a petition to the National People's Congress demanding freedom for political prisoners and political reforms, including freedom of speech, and also seeking a complete accounting and investigation of the massacre.

Those who signed the open letter had all been imprisoned after June 1989, and later released. They included Wang Donghai, 45, a department store manager. The petition was dated 27 May; according to relatives, public security officers came to the family's house just one day later and Mr Wang is now in police custody. According to the *South China Morning Post*, a second petition has been signed by 31 relatives of people killed in the 1989 massacre. *Teresa Poole - Peking*

Boris Yeltsin's office has unveiled a draft plan for power-sharing in Chechnya, offering it the status of a "sovereign state" within the Russian Federation. It follows his triumphant pre-election initiative in which he invited the Chechen leader, Zelimkhan Yandarbiyev, to Moscow, secured a ceasefire agreement from him, then flew to the republic for a visit in which he declared that Russia had won the war - while Mr Yandarbiyev remained in Moscow.

The proposed settlement, drafted by a presidential commission into the Chechen conflict, is similar to an agreement between Moscow and Tatarstan in 1994. Chechnya would have its own constitution, laws, taxes, control over some natural resources, and - possibly - an economic free zone. Control over weapons production, defence and foreign affairs would remain with Moscow. It has yet to be signed. *Phil Reeves - Moscow*

Thanks to a split in the conservative vote, the left-of-centre New Democratic Party squeaked to victory in British Columbia's legislative elections, bucking a trend of triumphs for budget-slashers elsewhere. Glen Clark, a former union organiser, was elected premier of Canada's most prosperous province even though his party received only 39 per cent of the vote in Tuesday's election. The New Democrats govern only two of the ten provinces - British Columbia and Saskatchewan. The Liberal Party got 42 per cent, but won only 33 seats in the 75-seat legislature, compared with 39 seats for the New Democratic Party. The right-wing Reform Party won two seats. *AP - Vancouver*

Ramzi Yousef went on trial in Manhattan yesterday. Accused of plotting to blow up as many as 11 American airliners on a single day as part of a campaign to punish the United States for its support of Israel, Mr Yousef, who received an electronics engineering degree from a South Wales college in 1989, had topped the Federal Bureau of Investigation's Most Wanted list of international criminals when he was arrested in Pakistan in February 1995 and extradited to the US. He is also believed to have been the mastermind behind the 1993 World Trade Center bombing which killed six people and injured a thousand others. *David Osborne - New York*

A teenager whose charity-funded hunting trip angered animal-rights activists failed to bag a bear in Alaska, a leader of the Make-A-Wish Foundation said. The chapter granted a \$4,000 (£2,650) Alaskan hunting trip to Erik Ness, 17, who had a brain tumour removed last autumn. The hunting part of the trip ended at the weekend, and he is fishing and sightseeing with his family. Karla Blomberg, president of the Minnesota chapter, said. *AP - Minnesota*

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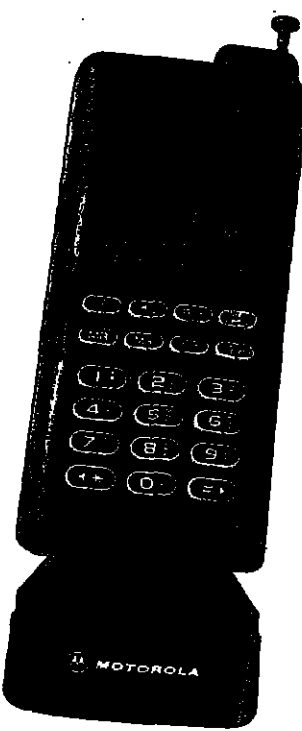
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Whitewater may spell end to Clinton's luck

RUPERT CORNWELL
Washington

If politics is about luck, then this week's Whitewater convictions in Arkansas may go down as an election year watershed, the moment Bill Clinton's long winning streak ended. A period when seemingly nothing could go wrong is over. Five months before the November poll, the White House is again under legal threat and political siege. For all the protestations that he was not involved in the events which led to the fraud convictions of Jim and Susan McDougal and the current governor of Arkansas, and that neither he or his wife Hillary has been charged over their past financial dealings, the former must now concern the President in the longer run.

The two-year investigation by the Whitewater special prosecutor Kenneth Starr has gained a new lease of life, while in three weeks a second Whitewater case goes to court in Little Rock, involving two local bankers accused of improperly channelling money to Mr Clinton's 1990 campaign to become governor. Once more, the President may be asked to testify.

More ominous, perhaps, the American legal system takes few prisoners. While acquittal of the McDougals and Mr Jim Guy Tucker was still possible, others compromised in the case may have preferred to stay silent. Now, they may conclude that their best chance of avoiding a lengthy jail term is to co-operate with Mr Starr and incriminate others. This could be the calculation of Mr Tucker, who resigned as governor after the verdicts were read.

In the shorter political term, the verdicts spell only trouble for the Clintons - reinforcing the dynamic of what has been shaping up as a particularly nasty election campaign. All along, the problem for the Republicans and Bob Dole, the party's presumptive nominee, has been to find a way of convincing voters not to hand Mr Clinton a second term. Thus far they have had precious few openings; the economy is growing at a decent clip, inflation is under control, foreign policy

mishaps have been avoided, and the President has co-opted popular Republican policies.

Above all, after mistakes that led to the 1994 mid-term election disaster, he has finally given the impression of getting the hang of the job. His opponents therefore have to go after Mr Clinton on the "character" issues of Whitewater, alleged philandering and the Vietnam draft, controversies that have dogged him since 1992.

The latest developments offer a truckload of new ammunition. As his sides ceaselessly point out, Mr Clinton was not involved. But a court of law has now found that Mr Tucker, his successor as governor of Arkansas, and the McDougals, his former business cronies, were crook. New Congressional scrutiny of Whitewater and other unflattering episodes involving the Clintons, such as the sacking of the White House travel office staff in 1993, is inevitable. Mr Dole himself is taking the high road, refusing to cast judgement. Not so his henchmen, most notably Alfonso D'Amato, the combative

New York Republican who chairs the Senate Banking Committee.

The committee had been due to wrap up its 18-month long Whitewater probe next month, but Republicans will almost certainly seek to extend it. The convictions showed "the depth of the Whitewater tragedy", Senator D'Amato said yesterday on ABC's *Good Morning America* programme.

Small comfort for the White House were the words of jurors after the trial, variously describing the President's videotaped testimony as "magnificent" and asserting that there were no grounds to pursue investigation of the Clintons.

There are few illusions about Republican tactics. "Everything, including the kitchen sink, will be thrown at us," said Mrs Clinton, who in January acquired the unwanted distinction of becoming the only First Lady to be subpoenaed to testify before a grand jury after the mysterious disappearance and rediscovery of key Whitewater documents in the White House private quarters.



Under siege: President Clinton is pressed by reporters over Tuesday's Whitewater guilty verdicts Photograph: Reuters

Holocaust row drives Abbé from France

IAN PHILLIPS
Paris

The French may never again see the man who was voted the most popular personality in the country last year. The 83-year-old priest, Abbé Pierre, has taken up refuge in an Italian monastery following a scandal about his support for the revisionist writing of his philosopher friend Roger Garaudy, and is threatening never to return.

Yesterday it was revealed that he had left France for the Benedictine monastery of Praglia, near Padua, at the beginning of the month. "The attacks of which I have been the target have been beyond measure," he said. "I have greatly suffered and at my age I cannot exclude the fact that I may end my days here."

The controversy flared up in April after the publication of Garaudy's *Mémoires Fondatrices de la Politique Israélienne* (Founding myths of Israeli politics). In this book, the 82-year-old former communist and convert to Islam questioned the existence of the Holocaust, saying that "until now we have only been given... false and arbitrary figures about the number of Jews killed". He also called the *Diary of Anne Frank* "a myth disguised as history".

When two associations of ex-deportees brought proceedings against Garaudy, he asked Abbé Pierre, his friend of 40 years, to intervene. Without even reading the book Abbé Pierre praised the "exceptional erudition" of the philosopher "who seeks for the truth in the face of undeniable deformations of reality".

The statement caused outrage and was seen as a serious

stain on what had been described by the French news magazine *L'Express* as a life of "such biblical perfection". Indeed Abbé Pierre has been a national hero for more than 40 years.

Born Henry Grouès, the priest had helped Jews and resistance workers to escape during the war. At the beginning of the Fifties he founded an association for the homeless, Emmaüs, and has remained at its head ever since.

His fame comes from his now legendary radio declaration during the harsh winter of 1964. With 2,000 people living on the streets of Paris in sub-zero temperatures, he called for the nation's help and was met with an overwhelming response.

He has failed to retract his comments, declaring that "to assimilate the work of the researcher and historian Garaudy with revisionism would be wrong". Even when he eventually condemned those "who in whichever way deny, falsify or reduce the importance of Shoah", he refused to withdraw his support for Garaudy.

Attacks against him came from all sides. His colleagues at Emmaüs condemned his views. The French Catholic Church was also keen to distance itself from its views calling his standpoint "immoral". The grand rabbi, Joseph Sitruk, and the president of the Jewish Consistory of France, Jean Kahn, declared that "His continued support for Roger Garaudy is unacceptable".

And he was ousted from the International League against Racism and Anti-Censorship of which he had been a member for over 20 years.

NATIONWIDE MORTGAGES

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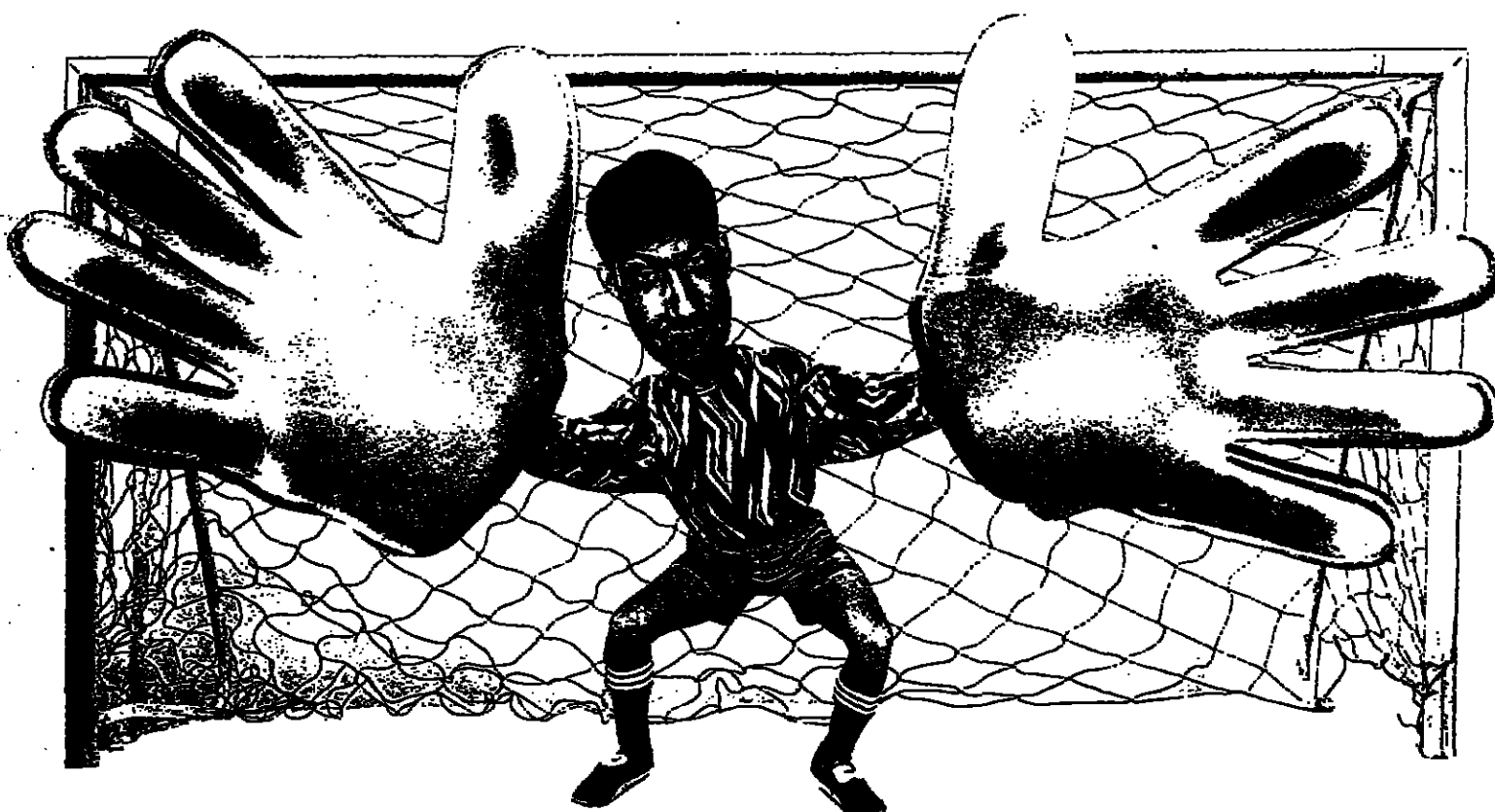


fig. 2 THE ART OF SAVING

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international

Fear and fury after Albania's sham election

Despite the violence, there has been little international protest, **Andrew Gumbel** reports

A large crowd was jostling and gesticulating in the foyer of the Socialist Party headquarters in Tirana. "Sali Berisha - Saddam," said one man pushing forward for attention. "Berisha, Pinochet!" said another, a little more forcefully, waving newspaper photographs of the injuries police inflicted on anti-government demonstrators in the city's main square on Tuesday. "Berisha, Adolf Hitler!" said a third.

The epithets heaped on the Albanian president may have been exaggerated, but the anger and frustration were genuine. Three days after a general election which Mr Berisha's Democratic Party rigged to give itself a crushing victory, the Socialist Party headquarters has come under virtual siege.

On Tuesday, uniformed police formed a human barricade around the building, letting nobody in - or out - and smashing a large pane of glass in the entrance. Yesterday, the uniforms were gone, but in their place were sinister-looking men with guns eyeing passers-by and occasionally stopping them to search their bags and check documents.

The city as a whole has been gripped by an unnerving sense of calm underscored by the lurking menace of violence. In the early hours of yesterday, a 24-year-old Socialist Party worker called Eduard Kulloli was found shot dead in central Tirana. According to party spokesmen, he was followed home from the headquarters and then shot in the back by a bearded man, speaking with a northern accent.

Other partially confirmed

reports speak of at least one other death and several beatings. According to the opposition, thousands of uniformed and plainclothes police - some of them convicted criminals specially released to cause trouble - have been drafted from Mr Berisha's native region in the north and even from Kosovo, in the former Yugoslavia.

"Fifty per cent of the police force are ordinary criminals," declared Arta Dade, who was a Socialist candidate in the elections. "At least 200 of our supporters have been arrested in the last two days."

Victims of the violence and their families are afraid to come forward, preferring to treat injuries at home rather than register at a hospital where they can be traced. At least one man was taken into police custody yesterday merely because he took a friend into a state clinic.

Meanwhile, the Socialist party chief for Tirana, Musa Ucin, was nursing a broken wrist at home. The leader of the Democratic Alliance, Arben Imami, was recovering from a beating that cost him three teeth, broke his jaw and left him with multiple body wounds.

Although the intimidation has spread, the international community has been slow in responding to the widespread vote-rigging denounced by international election observers and the ensuing police brutality against the opposition. Yesterday, the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe issued its much-leaked, critical report on the election, two days later than anticipated and in Vienna, not Tirana.

Some European political par-

ties, notably the senior party in Italy's new centre-left coalition, the PDS, have issued statements condemning the electoral fraud. But European government officials, many of whom have been ardent Berisha supporters up to now, remain cautious. Britain said it "regretted" the withdrawal of the opposition parties and called vaguely for an "accommodation" between the parties.

The opposition says it will hold demonstrations around the country in an attempt to bring disillusioned and cheated voters on to the street. It also wants sworn affidavits from citizens declaring which way they voted in order to challenge the official electoral lists.

"If we can't enter parliament we must establish a parliament of the people elsewhere," said Pirc Zogaj, of the Democratic Alliance. He and others also called for new elections in the next few months and appealed to the international community to ensure fair play.

It is by no means certain, however, that the opposition's anger can translate into either broad popular protest or international intervention. Most Albanians, displaying a fatalism borne out of 50 years of Stalinist dictatorship, seem too scared to take part in public rallies. As for the international community, it seems unlikely to press for anything more radical than "cross-party dialogue", in the words of one European diplomat.

Quite what form that dialogue should take, when Albania looks to be headed back towards a one-party system, is something the diplomats have yet to explain.



Bitter protest: Stender Gjinushi, the Social Democratic Party leader, is surrounded by plainclothes policemen during clashes over Albania's election outcome. Photograph: Reuters

Croatia gets cold shoulder for human rights abuses

TONY BARBER
Salonika

Parliamentarians from across Europe warned Croatia yesterday that it must clean up its record on democracy and human rights if it wants to join the Council of Europe, the continent's leading organisation for promoting political and civil liberties. The council's parliamentary assembly, grouping representatives from 39 countries, passed a resolution that criticised Croatia's right-wing nationalist government for taking repressive measures against the media and for not co-operating with the United Nations war crimes tribunal for former Yugoslavia.

The assembly's action was a slap in the face for Croatia, which has sought membership of the Council of Europe as a way of establishing its credentials as a properly functioning democracy. Since 1990, most former communist countries in central and eastern Europe have been admitted to the council.

The resolution on Croatia was adopted unanimously by a standing committee which has the power to speak for the parliamentary assembly. There was no doubt that the tough language reflected a swing of the European mood against Croatia over the past month.

The full assembly voted by a substantial majority on 24 April to invite Croatia to join the council, but only a few days later the Croatian government closed down one opposition newspaper, *Panorama*, and brought charges against journalists working for another. The parliamentarians were also disturbed by the Croatian government's dissolution of the Zagreb city assembly, which had voted to install an opposition politician as mayor.

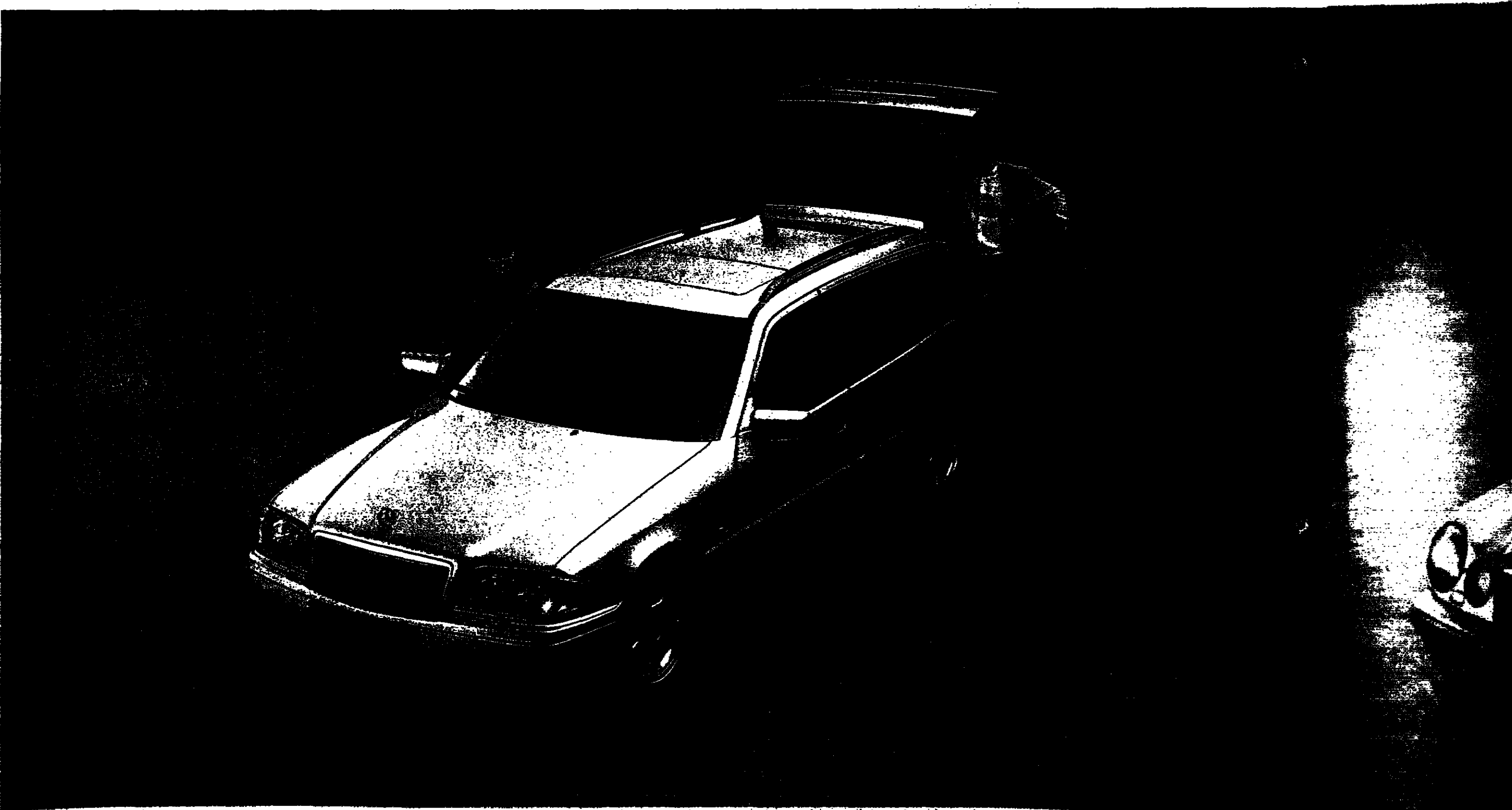
Finally, the UN tribunal in The Hague pointed out that Croats and Bosnian Croats indicted for war crimes were still at large, and that no proceedings had started against Croats alleged to have committed crimes during the recapture of rebel Serb-held areas last August. The conclusion reached by the parliamentarians was that Croatia was reneging on the very commitments it had made in order to win acceptance of its bid for council membership.

A Croatian delegate, Zarko Domljan, told the parliamentarians yesterday that he accepted their criticisms, but added: "I have the feeling that sometimes Croatia is looked at too rigorously, more rigorously than other countries."

He observed: "Believe me, Croatia is a democracy. We lived for 70 years in Yugoslavia and 45 years under communism, and we know very well the differences between the communist regime and the regime today in Croatia."

However, many at the Council clearly felt their organisation would lose credibility if they failed to give Croatia a public warning. "We have to react if the commitments are not fulfilled," said René van der Linden, a Dutch member who compiled a critical report on recent events in Croatia.

Diplomats said Britain, France, The Netherlands and Nordic countries were particularly concerned about endorsing the assembly's invitation to Croatia to join. In contrast, Germany and Austria have been keen to send encouraging signals to Croatia as an incentive to improve its performance. Russia, which joined the council early this year, has also been critical of Croatia. This appears to reflect pro-Serbian sympathies among Russian politicians.



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In other words, handling and performance haven't been sacrificed to accommodate the space behind you.

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مكتبة الفجر

Super-cities threaten to swallow humanity

Developing world hosts explosive urban growth

The world's largest cities

JOHN LICHFIELD

The entire globe is following the 19th century European and American example and pouring into cities, with implications that could be either benign or calamitous.

Within 10 years the majority of the people of the world will be living in urban conglomerations, the United Nations reported yesterday. Almost all the urban growth will come in the developing world, which is spawning large cities at the rate of 10 a year.

In 1950 the world had 83 cities with populations of 1,000,000 or more (about the size of Birmingham or Glasgow). Today there are 280. By 2015 there will be more than 500.

By the year 2015, 12 of the world's 15 largest cities will be in Asia; only one - New York - will be in North America; none will be in Europe.

In 1950, only one city - New York - had a population of more than 10 million. Now there are 14, of which only four are in the developed world.

Early in the next century, only one European city - greater Paris - will be in the world's top 30. Lagos will be the third largest city in the world.

From Ancient Rome to 19th century New York or Manchester, cities have always been ambiguous institutions. They have been sinks of crime, depravity, oppression, poverty and suffering. But they have also been crucibles of personal enrichment, civilisation, culture and political rights. The UN says the vast urbanisation in progress has, similarly, a potential for immense social progress and economic advance and a capacity for disaster and human degradation on an unimaginable scale.

The UN report on the State of World Population was published to coincide with the opening of the Habitat II conference in Istanbul today. Representa-

tives from the world's nations will be asked to act on the report's findings and steer development programmes towards urban education and health projects, especially for women, to improve the upward mobility of shanty-town dwellers. The UN Secretary-General, Boutros Boutros-Ghali, will also call for efforts to control the "inevitable" march of the city. The UN is pushing for the development of a large number of manageable, medium-sized cities rather than a few, uncontrollable super-cities.

Another UN agency, the International Labour Organisation (ILO) - is calling for redoubled efforts by wealthy

'Cities can promote health or cause disease; empower people or impose on them a struggle for survival'

countries and poor countries alike to create jobs for the urban poor. Otherwise, it warns, the armies of city dwellers living in poverty will exceed 1 billion by the end of the century.

"By 2000, one half of humanity will be living and working in cities, with developing countries accounting for the major share of the world's new urban population," said ILO deputy director, Katherine Hagen. "These people will need jobs if the new cities are to develop as centres of economic opportunity and civilisation rather than zones of inequality and misery."

The main report, by the UN Population Fund, stresses the potential benefits, as well as the menaces, presented by the urban explosion.

"The urban future carries

many risks for the physical environment and natural resources, for social cohesion and for individual rights but it also offers vast opportunities. The experience of large cities as concentrations of human creativity and the highest forms of social organisation suggests that the future will open new avenues for human development."

"Cities provide capital, labour and markets for entrepreneurs and innovators at all levels of economic activity. Cities already account for 60 to 80 per cent of the gross national product of many developing countries."

Three factors explain the rapid growth of city populations, the report says. There is the migration into town of impoverished country-dwellers. There is a colonisation of outlying villages by urban conglomerations. But the largest factor is the population explosion among slum-dwelling citizens themselves. Despite the appallingly unhealthy conditions endured by people in the slums of places such as Lagos and Kinshasa, the urban birth rate invariably outpaces the death rate.

The report does point to hopeful signs in some Third World cities. One example is Bombay where progress has been made in replacing squatter homes with new dwellings.

At the other end of the scale, there are - especially in Africa - almost wholly dysfunctional cities, which have become nightmarish agglomerations of insanitary homes, ruined roads, abandoned services and crime.

"Increasing urbanisation has the potential for improving human life or increasing human misery," the report says. "Cities can... promote health or cause disease; empower people to realise their needs and desires or impose on them a simple struggle for basic survival. Which of these represents the urban future is a matter for us to decide."

Population, millions

2015 (projected)

1994*

* 1995 figures for Delhi, Dhaka, Lagos, London, Karachi and Manila.

No increase projected for London and Osaka

Source: UN

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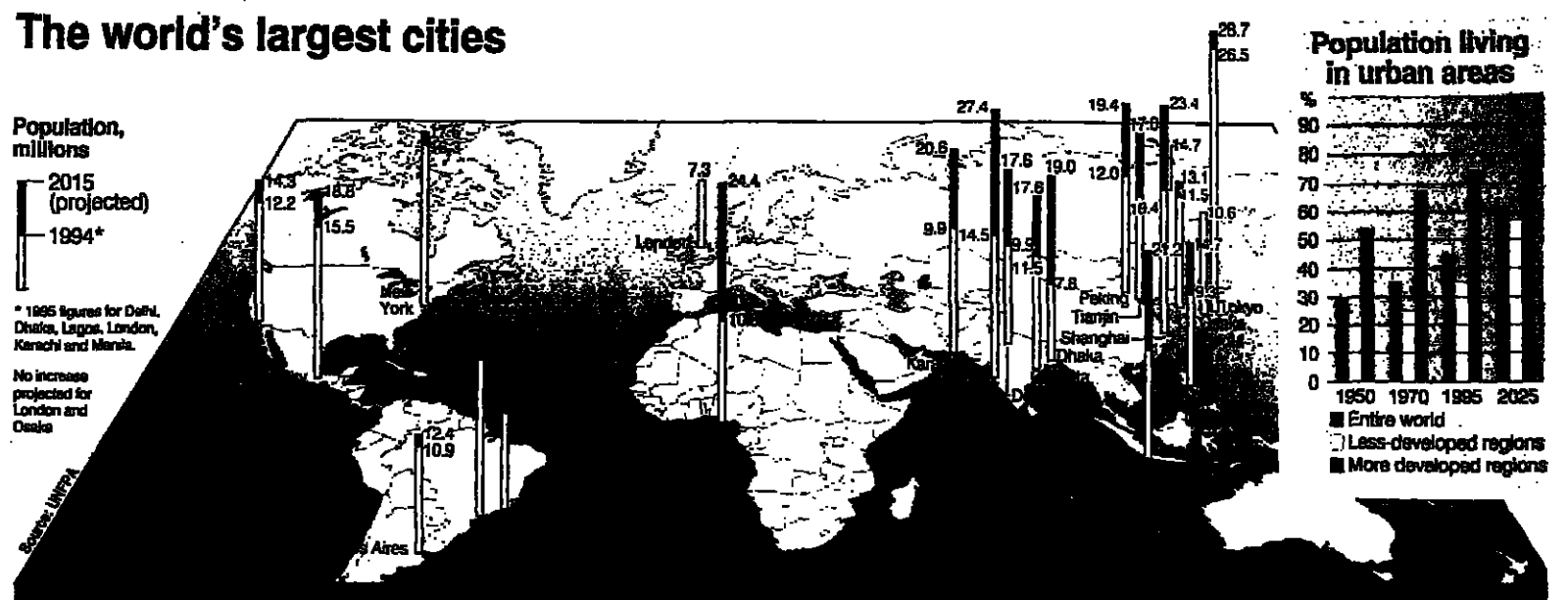
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1994*

* 1995 figures for Delhi, Dhaka, Lagos, London, Karachi and Manila.

No increase projected for London and Osaka

Source: UN



Human tide sweeps daily into India's slums

New Delhi — Every train that pulls into Nizamuddin station in New Delhi brings a new wave of migrants to this mega-city of more than 10 million people. My bureau is on the main road leading away from Nizamuddin station, and amidst the cycle-rickshaws whizzing by, the saffron-robed pilgrims, schoolboys, and businessmen with cheap briefcases, I can easily spot the newcomers.

It is their dazed, disoriented look that gives these migrants away, as they wander up my road. They carry few possessions - cooking gear and a few blankets - and have many children. Few can read and often they will

halt strangers and ask them where an address is, one scrawled on a note. That address is their only hope, their only connection in this teeming city to a relative, perhaps, or a fellow villager, who can offer shelter and a job. If they are Muslim (as many are, since they come from neighbouring Bangladesh) they are usually directed across the four-lane Mathura Road to the shrine of a sufi saint, Hazrat Nizamuddin. There, in the alleys, beside the free kitchens, they squat with their children, waiting for rice and lentils ladled out of giant vats. These scraps are probably more than they

ate back in their villages. At night, they sleep on the narrow verge in Mathura Road. Some earn a few rupees begging at the traffic lights, others root through rubbish heaps alongside pigs and stray dogs. The stronger migrants may get jobs as market porters, rickshaw-cyclists or set up a roadside stall selling cracked coconuts or a sliced cucumber with masala. Their wives or daughters may work as servants or on a construction site, balancing 12 bricks on their head as they climb rickety bamboo scaffolds for one of the new gleaming offices built to house multi-national companies.

Some pavement-dwellers may graduate to a slum hut, roofed with plastic sheeting and held down with branches and broken bicycle wheels. A one-room slum hut next to the nahalla, the fetid drainage canal which runs past the crematorium pyres near Nizamuddin, costs about 500 rupees rent a month, usually paid to the local gangsters. The slums around my place usually have electricity, illegal of course. Every electricity post is rigged with hundreds of wires leading down into the slum dwellings, and because of this illegal tapping (local garment shops and factories also do it)

Tim McGirk

The new Mercedes E-class Estate. For those who want to take it all with them.

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car on the road. It was also designed to have even more space than its legendary predecessor. More space for you, more space for your family, more space for your luggage.

So which is it to be? A Mercedes estate or a Mercedes estate? Ah, decisions decisions.



Mercedes-Benz Engineered like no other car.

The danger of mixing water and electricity

We've always been told that water and electricity don't mix. Plunge a toaster in the bath and watch the sparks fly. The same motto probably applies to the companies that provide water and electricity services.

A fashion is sweeping through the privatised utility industries. Like most fashions it is superficially appealing but transitory. The fashion is that utilities which are quite effective when they focus on a relatively simple task, supplying electricity to a region, for instance, should really become multi-utility companies. The skills learnt in, say, providing water services can easily be transferred to gas and electricity and even to telecommunications. The result is you get a stronger company, based on several legs.

In reality this fashion is almost certainly merely a justification for empire building. Aggressive managers want to show what they are made of so they go looking for acquisitions, armed not just with surplus cash but with flashy sounding theories supplied to them by their handsomely paid City advisers and management consultants.

The multi-utility concept lies behind Scottish Power's bid to gobble up Southern Water for £1.56bn. Southern Electric countered yesterday by bidding £1.6bn. Scottish Power, the electricity generator in Scotland, already owns Manweb (the regional electricity com-

pany), Scottish Telecom (which is linked to Vodafone the mobile phone operator) and a gas supply subsidiary.

Why should we bother about these bids? Companies change hands all the time. If the management of one company can do a better job of running another one as well, then mergers or takeovers may make everyone better off. A little chopping and changing was inevitable as the utilities adjusted to emerging competition. They tell us that water in pipes, electricity in wires, all follow the same principles. After all, building societies and banks are moving into one another's territories. Surely broadly based utility service companies can be as efficient as broadly based financial service companies?

Perhaps. But the merger mania across utilities seems increasingly ludicrous. The arguments aired by Scottish Power and Southern Electric in pursuit of its water company prey are tenuous to say the least. And the risks of allowing these monopolies to coagulate are considerable. What makes managements efficient is competitive pressure. These mergers will further reduce competition and so erode pressure on managers to deliver a better service to consumers.

We are supposed to believe for a start that Southern Water will be better run by the management of one of these other companies. Perhaps. But the idea that they bring any special expertise that will automatically improve the business

is not very credible. After all, what do power stations in Scotland and baths and sinks in Brighton have in common? Southern Electric marshals a slightly more plausible case. At least that company and Southern Water have customers in common. Arguably there could be savings from joint billing. But even so, the geographical overlap is not complete. Modern information technology bills so swiftly and smoothly that the savings from a common system are unlikely to be immense. And meanwhile, the public will be right to worry that the family defaulting on its electricity bill could find its water supply jeopardised, too.

The record of the mergers that have been allowed so far is not persuasive. The City is distinctly unimpressed by the take-over of Norweb (the regional electricity company) by North West Water. Privatised industries have been down this road before. Managers of recently privatised companies do not feel they are proper private sector managers until they have lost their virginity on the acquisition trail. Soon after its privatisation in 1984 BT acquired a Canadian telephone manufacturer called Mitel on the grounds that there was great synergy. It was a disaster that took years to unravel.

Newly privatised companies seem to have a macho, but entirely irrational, desire to expand into other fields that they know nothing about. Management should know their strengths, and their limits, and stick to what they are best at. But if they are tempted to stray, then the regulators and competition authorities should watch closely, because the merging of important utilities will be bad for consumers in the long run.

The regulators within each industry have a hard enough job as it is, working out what the real costs are that the companies face, what their profits are likely to be, and how low they should set their prices. Companies keen to make profits for their shareholders have an interest in disguising future profitability. How much easier it will be for them to do this if they have diversified into other utilities.

These utilities are not so much trading assets as trading regulatory regimes. As competition emerges in the electricity and gas markets, huge companies with safe profits from their secure water monopolies will be in a stronger position to withstand the competition. Predatory pricing, it's called. It would be much harder to stop in a world of merged multi-utilities.

At this point Ian Lang, President of the Board of Trade, should step in. The individual regulators won't bat an eyelid at the bids. The Monopolies and

Mergers Commission, we know, is quite happy to see utilities merge; it thinks that will create national champions. Mr Lang should step in to rule out further consolidation, just as he did with the bid from Powergen to take over Southern Electric last month. But if these kinds of mergers across utilities are allowed to continue, it will create the need for regulation to keep pace. Super-utilities need super regulators to bash them, beat them and keep them in check.

On our way to Ardwick

It is April 1910. Arsenal are beating Spurs 2-0 in the FA Cup Semi-Final with five minutes to play. The supporters break into the traditional chant: "We're on our way to Ardwick, we're on our way to Ardwick". A rebuilt Wembley as a new national stadium would be great. But the mystical significance of the name is just chance. If the twin towers had been built a little to the east, the chant might have been: "We're on our way to Neasden".

The North dominates most of the sports that would be played in the stadium. So we believe it would be better to make a fresh start with a new stadium in Manchester.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Publish the scientific facts on beef

Sir: The Government asserts that its actions over beef are in accordance with the scientific facts ("John Major does a Margaret Thatcher", 22 May). So far they have been remarkably successful in concealing these facts from the rest of us and from our Continental colleagues. What is so clearly missing is a comprehensive written statement of what is known; and – just as important when considering policy – of what remains obscure.

Where these facts are known they need to be easily available to the public, and updated regularly, so that the public can draw its own conclusions about the uncertainties.

The blame for allowing this essentially technical matter to become violently political does not lie at Europe's door; it is our own failure to deal with BSE over the past decade. Import bans imposed half a dozen years ago by the USA, Canada and New Zealand should have provided sufficient warning. If we are to proceed more rationally we first need a comprehensive Green Paper. Preparing it might be a useful education for Ministers and their officials.

TERRY PRICE
Jordans, Buckinghamshire

Sir: George Walden is quoted as saying "anyone who has doubts [about the Government's strategy] should speak out" ("For beef, Major and St George", 28 May). I don't have doubts; I am dismayed by the popular support for this disastrous and counterproductive "strategy". It isn't a strategy, because a strategy aims at a long-term objective, and the obstructive policy being pursued at present by the Government is anything but long-term in its objective – unless it be the re-election of a Tory government. Obstructing public business is a form of secondary picketing and inevitably provokes retaliation in a battle with consumers which our government cannot win.

CHRISTOPHER G. TURNER
Chipping Norton, Oxfordshire

Sir: Our trade with Germany is worth some £1.7bn, so I wonder where those 62 per cent of Tory voters cited in your NOP poll expect the UK to sell its goods and services if German imports are banned here?

There is no consolation for any of us in this poll other than its drawing to our attention the tragic lack of clear information about the advantages of EU membership and our continuing ignorance of the economic consequences of withdrawal.

DAVID WILSON
Leeds

Sir: Sir Andrew Aguecheek, in Act I scene III of *Twelfth Night*, says "Methinks sometimes I have no more wit than a Christian or an ordinary man has; but I am a great eater of beef, and I believe that does harm to my wit..." Sir Toby Belch states there is no question about the harm: a pity he did not give details and so help our scientists. Since English cattle have survived the 400 years, one must assume that a cure was found; or was Aguecheek just another victim of a media panic?

CHRIS FITZGUGH
Mapperley Park, Nottingham



'That's the trouble with this government, they're all talking bull semen'

New Age beliefs are valid too

Sir: Polly Toynbee's attack on new ageism ("New Age may be mainstream, but it's a mistake", 27 May) sounded dogmatically out of date, containing precisely that brand of holier-than-thou "rationalism" that so many people ("new age" or otherwise) now understandably reject. By claiming that "science is our triumph over nature" and that "nature is the enemy" Ms Toynbee not only parrots old, unproven beliefs but she also presumes that something called "nature", of which humans are evidently not part, exists only to be conquered and exploited.

Such a prejudiced position implicitly denies the validity of all "non-scientific" understandings of the world (and therefore all those who do not ascribe to establishment beliefs) at all times and places. Only present understandings are valid, and always will be. Ms Toynbee, of course, knows the Truth. If this isn't imperialism, religious or otherwise, I don't know what is.

NICK HUNT
Centre for the Study of Science and Science Policy
University of Lancaster

Sir: Polly Toynbee's commentary on the New Age purports to vanquish the hokum of the Mind Body Spirit Festival by championing the triumph of science over nature.

Toynbee suggests that nature is the enemy. Her evidence is that "nature killed babies, gave us smallpox, famine, plague and a life of unremitting toil followed by an early death". Her inference is that

humanity has nothing to do with the creation of these phenomena. Her conclusions cannot stand up to the rigours of scientific proof and demonstration that she champions. Toynbee's perspective is Old Age, the philosophy of dualism, which can only recognise the conflict of opposing forces. The New Age is based on the philosophy of holism, the recognition of harmony within all aspects of creation. We are all one; nature, science, humanity, even Polly and I.

DARRYL O'KEEFE
National Federation of Spiritual Healers
Sunbury, Middlesex

Labour supports victims of divorce

Sir: Your editorial ("Labour joins the right: divorced from reality", 29 May) is misleading.

No, we have never advocated compulsory counselling for all married couples. Yes, we did dare to express the view that someone seeking a divorce should first explore on a one-to-one basis with a qualified counsellor whether the marriage might be saved. If this is too radical and communitarian a notion for the *Independent*, well so be it. Broken homes often mean damaged children and divorce costs over £4bn a year. The state has a legitimate interest in promoting measures to save marriages that are capable of being saved.

Labour's position is as clear

today as it has been throughout. We gave the broad thrust of the Family Law Bill our support at Second Reading and made it clear that our support at later stages was dependent on the Government's response to amendments designed to strengthen protection for the victims of violence in the home and the interests of children.

The assertion that we propose mediation for violent marriages is completely untrue. We moved an amendment that would have had precisely the opposite effect by removing the danger that the Legally-Aided victims of domestic violence would be forced into mediation with their attackers. The Government rejected that amendment.

Unfortunately, the Government chose to reject all attempts to strengthen the Family Law Bill in this regard. They chose, instead, to seek to buy off rebellion in their own ranks by making concessions which distorted the Bill and rendered it, in a number of key respects, unworkable and unsupportable.

The *Independent* may take the view that a Family Law Bill that works against the best interests of children and the victims of domestic violence is "far from perfect". The NSPCC and the Women's Aid Federation of England go considerably further than that and with good cause. They warn of the "serious problems which women and children escaping violence will face in the divorce process if the Bill goes through in its present form".

and that the changes have "diluted its principles and worked against the best interests of children". It is for these reasons, rather than "for the sake of short-term political gain", that Labour finds itself unable to support the Family Law Bill in its present form.

We shall in the light of these and other legitimate concerns about the workability of the mechanisms proposed, continue to try to improve the Bill throughout its remaining stages. The Government's willingness to respond positively in this regard is crucial to the creation of legislation capable of delivering a sensible and family-friendly divorce process. The opportunity to move towards this principled objective, rather than political expediency, will determine whether or not Labour votes against the Family Law Bill at Third Reading.

PAUL BOATENG MP
(Brent South, Lab)
House of Commons
London SW1

The writer is Labour Legal Affairs Spokesman.

Burma: investors should wait

Sir: Your report ("Words of hope reverberate across Burma", 28 May) on the weekend speech by the Burmese opposition leader Aung San Suu Kyi made one key omission. Foreign investors, she has consistently said, "should jolly

well wait" until Burma has a democratic government.

Yet British government policy remains that "Outside of the EU arms embargo, there are no obstacles to UK companies doing business with Burma". If pressed, the Department of Trade hard disk will even come up with some po-faced phrases about trade reinforcing pressure for reform.

The State Law and Order Restoration Council military government is largely kept in place, able to spend half its revenue on arms, by precisely this dollar-signs-in-the-eyes mentality. Burma supplies 60 per cent of the world's heroin, and the SLORC take their cut of that foreign trade too.

Even the free-trading US can see this is not acceptable. Yet last February, while companies like Heineken and Levi's were leaving, the British government was handing out £1,000 a time to encourage companies such as GEC Marconi and John Brown to attend a trade mission in Rangoon.

SALLY STEEN
Christian Solidarity International
Brussels

England's Church

Sir: Andreas Whittam Smith is only half right when he says that just the monarchy and the Church of England among national institutions pre-date St Bartholomew's Hospital ("Is Bart's saved?", 27 May). The Church in England was certainly a fact but not the Church of England.

FRANCIS WHITE
Salisbury, Wiltshire

The cost of teenagers

Sir: Your front page report ("Bad news for parents: Teenagers cost £36 a day", 27 May) is misleading.

In truth, teenagers are as costly as parents can afford to allow them to be; which, in my experience, is considerably less than £36 a day. My own children have long since flown the nest, and I am retired but my weekly earnings when we were raising our family, even before deductions, fell well short of such a figure.

It is a pity that our youth are led to believe that computers, personal CD players, and mobile telephones are essential adjuncts to life. The plain fact is: if you cannot afford to give your children such advantages – and few parents can – they will have to resign themselves to life without them.

PETER FOOKS
Edwinton,
Nottingham

Apostolic models for ordination

Sir: No doubt Lord Runcie knows his Canon Law as well as the Rev Nigel Scotland does (Letters, 27 May), and ordained men, whatever their sexuality, precisely because they were "of good repute and such as to be a wholesome example and pattern to the flock of Christ." Nothing decadent about simply filling a post with someone who fits the job-description.

The former Archbishop might still, however, be open to friendly criticism in the light of what we know about the choosing of the Apostles. Pre-eminent among the saints whom the early Church routinely invoked as patrons of homosexual marriage ceremonies, we find the holy apostles Philip and Bartholomew, paired disciples whom Christ himself ordained on the same day.

Now if Mr Scotland were to argue that, to be strictly faultless in following the Saviour's example, Archbishop Runcie should perhaps also have ordained these men's boyfriends, there, I think, he might be on quite strong ground.

DR MICHAEL HALLS
Christon,
Devon

Cleaning up for the Millennium

Sir: Contrary to Andrew Blundy's letter (29 May), British Gas is already supporting the Millennium Exhibition to the tune of millions of pounds.

Firstly, British Gas has committed to pay some £20m to secure a Jubilee Line station on the Greenwich peninsula. Without this, the site would never have been considered for hosting the Millennium Exhibition and its long-term regeneration would have been less certain. Secondly, British Gas is making a substantial part of the site available, at no cost, to the Exhibition. Thirdly, British Gas is committed to meeting in full, from its own funds, the substantial cost of cleaning up the Peninsula to comply with the latest environmental legislation.

ROY M. DANTZIC
Managing Director,
Port Greenwich Ltd
British Gas plc
London WC1

essay

An anthem for our times

'God Save the Queen' is not fixed in stone. It has been changed before, surely it can change again to become more modern?
Paul Vallely on the chequered history of the world's national anthems

So now the mad feminists want to rewrite the national anthem. Heaven forbid! No wonder Sir Backbench Rentaque and his colleagues are moving stoutly to the barricades. True, the monstrous regiment want only to change one line. And in the fourth verse. But it is a question of principle.

But hang on. The fourth verse? Most of us didn't even know there was a fourth verse. Indeed, many don't really know about the second one, which talks about scattering enemies and their knavish tricks (see box to the right). Where a second is sung people usually go straight for the third which is more benign (and makes clear the constitutional brakes on the monarch whose job is to defend our laws and keep on our right side). But a fourth?

Actually, there is a fifth too. But political correctness – or tact as it was known in an earlier age – intervened long ago. For the fifth said:

Lord, grant that Marshal Wade,
Min. by thy mighty aid,
Victory bring.
May he scullion lush and like a torrent rush.
Rebellious Scots to crush.
God save the King.

Marshal Wade was a leading Redcoat officer in the army sent north from London in 1745 to stem the southward advance of Bonnie Prince Charlie. The anthem is on record as first having been sung in public at a theatre in Drury Lane, not as a general hymn but as a singular prayer at a time of national danger – the Scottish forces got to within 100 miles of London. And the anthem was, according to the historian, Linda Colley, author of *Britons: Forging the Nation 1707-1837*, inextricably bound up with the defence of Protestantism against the threatening Catholicism of the Papist Stuarts. It was sung in Drury Lane every night, and also at Covent Garden, until news of the Young Pretender's defeat reached the capital.

Even the English eventually realised that it was not diplomatic to ask the Scots to join in with that verse by the time the tune came to be described as the "British national anthem" in the early 1800s. The fifth verse was dropped and the second was piously amended so that the national aspiration was located not in the king but in God: "on him our hopes we fix" gave way to "on Thee our hopes we fix".

But the history of this clarion call to national pride is actually a bit murkier even than that. Ironically the earliest versions of the song are thought to have been in circulation among supporters of the exiled Stuart dynasty who later rallied to Prince Charlie's standard. There is even a suggestion that it may originally have been composed for the French king, Louis XIV, though its melodic shaped and dotted rhythm can be traced through a number of 17th century galliards to a catch by Purcell called *Upon the Duke's Return* published in 1682.

Given such a history of development the change which the feminists of Birmingham's Labour group have this week demanded – from "that men should



England's rugby team struggle with the national anthem. But Will Carling's attempt to usurp it with 'I Vow to Thee My Country' never caught on

Empics

brothers be" to "that all should united be" – might seem small beer. But tunes accorded such established status carry huge burdens of significance, at least in England. Not for the English the easy progress of the Celtic nations into anthems which suit the mood and the time. When it comes to rugby, for example, the Welsh, Irish and Scots have adopted appropriate airs *Bread of Heaven*, *Molly Malone* and *Flower of Scotland* for communal celebration. But the English have never moved so fluently. *Abide with Me* at the rugby league and football cup finals now lacks resonance and *Swing Low, Sweet Chariot* has disintegrated into a boozy roar by rugby union crowds.

Will Carling, when he was captain of England, tried to rectify this. He wanted the Rugby Union to drop *God Save the Queen*. He even got the words of *I Vow to Thee My Country* printed in the match programme at Twickenham two years ago but few took it up.

But not all other nations have it easier. It is not good form to pass judgement on the musical emblems of other peoples so it would be disrespectful to dwell on the idea that the Algerian national anthem sounds uncannily like the theme tune from *St Trinians* or to record that the actor Richard E Grant used to sing Swaziland's for panto auditions.

In any case it seems that most nations

have no difficulty in finding disrespectful dissenters among their own folk. In the United States basketball star Mahmoud Abdul-Rauf (not Chris Jackson), who converted to Islam in 1991, refuses to stand for the pre-match anthem. "I'm a Muslim first and last. My duty is to my creator, not nationalistic ideology," he proclaimed. After the £1.8m-a-year star called the American flag a "symbol of oppression and tyranny" callers to local radio phone-ins suggested that he spend some of his vast income on seeing a psychiatrist.

In Britain we do things on a smaller scale. Tory backbenchers complained when the BBC chose Beethoven's *Ode to Joy* as its theme music for this summer's European football championships on the Euroceptual grounds that this is also the anthem for the dreaded European Union.

What we are dealing with here is the protection of national pride. The greatest of all anthems, the *Marseillaise*, the musical apotheosis of revolutionary France, was banned there for most of the 19th century when more conservative forces prevailed. And the national anthem of the United States of America assumed its present august status from a much lowlier start as an 18th century London drinking song called *To Anacreon in Heaven*. One day, demographic changes

in the world's greatest nation may force further changes: as the Hispanic population grows and Spanish becomes the mother tongue of the greater part of the nation (a development forecast for the middle of the next century) the opening words of the *Star Spangled Banner* may have to be altered to "José, Can You See..."

The safest thing, of course, would be simply to have just one interchangeable anthem for all nations. It was almost thus. Just as English is now the international language, so *God Save the King* was once the international anthem. The anthem of the German Empire was *Heil Dir Im Siegerkranz* but the tune is exactly the same as that of the British national tune. So was that of Switzerland, Norway and 20 other countries at various times. Liechtenstein still retains it.

But nationhood demands a distinct anthem as much as it does a discrete airline. So they have all branched out on their own, and not always with success. Remember the gruesome fiasco of the search for a non yuck-making national tune in Australia (after they discovered that *Waltzing Matilda* was not a waltz at all)? The Russians have now gone through something similar. They took an uninspired piece by Glinka and for three years struggled to find suitable words to fit the tune. Citizens sent in thousands of lines

of doggerel before a special government commission, under the man who had written Stalin out of the Soviet anthem in the 1930s, gave up.

New anthems can be created which inspire popular affection. It can be done, as *Flower of Scotland* shows. Though it has all the mordant qualities of a traditional lament it was, in fact, written in 1966 by the late Roy Williamson, of folk band the Corries. Since then this ballad of the routing of the English army at Bannockburn has usurped Scotland the Brave as the unofficial national song.

Perhaps the English should follow suit, though it would be more comely to find away of expressing pride in England without seeking to revive past quarrels with other nations. Surely it is time to consign *Land of Hope and Glory*, *Jerusalem*, and *Rule Britannia* to the museum of our imperial past. And though *Lillibulero*, the signature tune of the BBC World Service, is always splendidly evocative when you hear it on a short-wave radio in some foreign part, what we need is something more modern.

It was Billy Connolly, a foreigner, who once suggested that the perfect candidate might be the theme tune from *The Archers*. With some apt lyrics – perhaps about out-of-town shopping centres, theme parks and the Citizen's Charter – that might just do the job.

The National Anthem

God save our gracious Queen,
Long live our noble Queen,
God save the Queen.

Send her victorious,
Happy and glorious,
Long to reign over us:
God save the Queen

O Lord our God arise,
Scatter her enemies,
And make them fall:
Confound their politics,
Frustrate their knavish tricks.
On her our hopes we fix:
God save us all

Thy choicest gifts in store,
On her be pleased to pour;
Long may she reign:
May she defend our laws,
And ever give us cause
To sing with heart and voice:
God save the Queen

None on this land alone,
But, by God's mercy's
known,
From shore to shore,
Lord make the nations see
That men should brothers be,
And form one family,
The wide world o'er

Alternative Anthem

An Alternative Anthem for Little England

When come our railway trains,
Punch up our water mains,
And submergence,
Keep from the wrecking crew,
Small shops and Doctor Who,
Anything that goes Mmm,
And cheap baked beans.

This is our heritage,
Names like Eileen and Reg,
And warm flat beer,
Lace curtains, cricket bats,
Monogrammed toilet mats,
Plays set in laundromats,
And Clacton Pier.

(There is a third verse but no one can remember it.)

By Martin Newell

A patriotic selection: anthems from around the world

Germany: August von Fallersleben's famous "Deutschland über Alles" was set to Haydn's music and authorised as Germany's national anthem in 1922. But by 1952 the third verse was seen as the only one peaceable enough to be retained. It is now the anthem for the reunited nation. *Unity and Right and Freedom are the pledge of happiness. Bloom in the splendour of this happiness. Bloom, my German Fatherland!*

France: Some Birmingham councillors will not be happy with

the *Marseillaise*: *Under our flags, may victory follow your manly accents; play your dying enemies! See your triumph and our glory!*

UK: An anthem using words from the UN charter was commissioned for last year's 50th anniversary celebrations from the composer Howard Blake. He did as well as could be expected with lyrics such as: *We the people of the United Nations are determined to establish conditions under which justice and respect for international obligations can be maintained.*

Rest of the Rest: Most contented; Forever your slaves, your air set my heart in tune! As if it were a flute. In spring, O mother mine, the fragrance from your mango groves! Makes me wild with joy! What a thrill! (Bangladesh)

Most intellectually bankrupt: *Arise! Arise! Millions but with one heart, Braving the enemy's fire! March on! (China)*

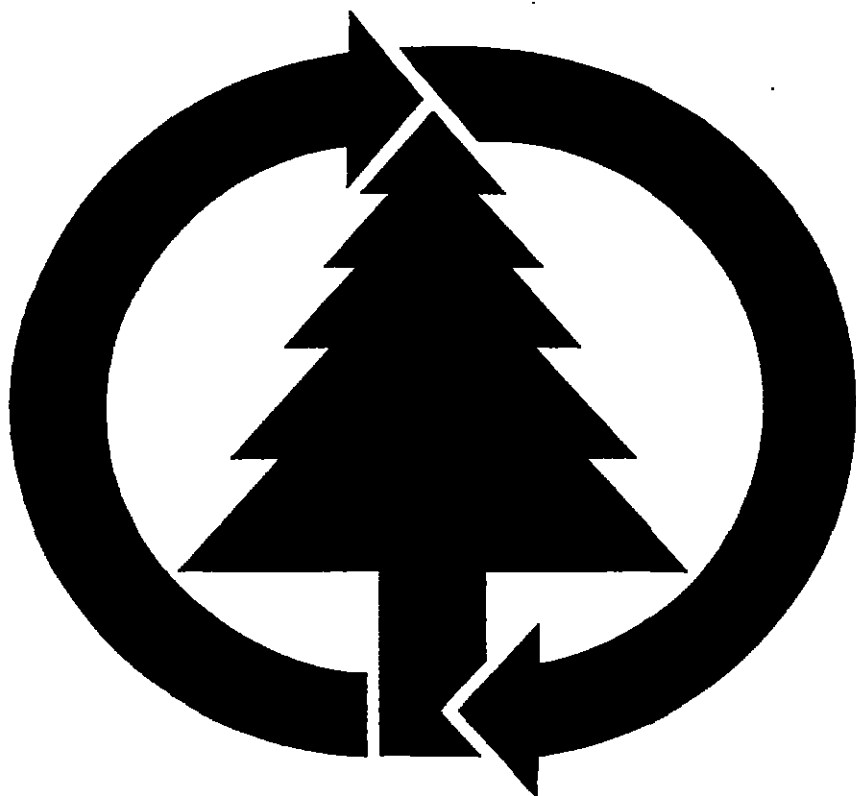
Bloodiest: *When we spoke, nobody listened to us! So we have taken the*

noise of gunpowder as our rhythm! and the sound of machine guns as our melody. (Algeria)

Most date-specific: *"Let us never forget the historic appeal of August 30th 1969." (Togo)*

Most Bacchanaliart: *My friends, the vines have produced again! Sweet wine which enlivens our veins! Which melts away all our troubles. (Slovenia)*

Ben Summers



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Lost for words? Ask the professor

When you got an Oxbridge degree in English in the old days, it fitted you for absolutely nothing. Nowadays, that's all changed. It still fits you for almost nothing, but, if you're very lucky, it may get you a job writing a newspaper column on English usage and the derivation of words. Such a man is Professor Wordsmith, who is back again today to talk about words and their often very specialised meanings. All yours, Prof!

When you leave a toothpaste tube open on the bathroom basin, and forget to put the cap back, the top of the toothpaste soon goes hard and forms a sort of green or stripy plug which blocks up the aperture. Is there any technical name for this little bit of hardened toothpaste?

Professor Wordsmith writes: Interesting point. I had never thought of that one. No, I don't think there is. I am very interested in the behaviour of chains and plugs,

in baths, sinks, bidets etc. I don't mean when the plug is actually in the plughole and the chain is at rest – I mean when the plug is reclining quietly on the back of the basin or the side of the bath.

I have noticed that very often, just when you think all is at rest, the chain starts a very gentle slithering motion, then gathers speed as it falls into the bath or basin, and finally brings down the plug with it. Is there any word in English for this distinctive motion of the chain?

Professor Wordsmith writes: Not so far as I am aware.

Is there any word for the one rogue piece of coloured washing (usually a red pillow slip, in my experience) which gets into a washing machine load of white washing, and tints everything else slightly pink?

Professor Wordsmith writes: There may well be, but I have never come across it.

Recently I went to an airport to meet a friend, and as her flight was late, I got a good chance to watch the way in



Miles Kington

which the people who were waiting greeted the people who were arriving. Very often the meeting took the form of a kiss, or hug, or some other form of embrace, but I couldn't help noticing that in almost every case, one of the partners to the embrace was less keen on the act than the other one – perhaps through being young and shy, or travel-worn, or just not very keen on the other person. Whatever the reason, most of the hugs were a bit one-sided. Is there any word to describe the less willing partner in a close physical union?

Professor Wordsmith writes: That's a very good

point, and there is a very clear need for such a word. Oddly enough, it does not, so far as I know, exist.

You can insert one finger into the handle of a dainty teacup and two into the handle of a larger one. When it comes to hugs, you can often get three fingers in the handle and very occasionally four, but almost always there are superfluous fingers dangling outside the handle, fingers which are not, if you know what I mean, load-bearing. Is there an adjective to describe such unused fingers?

Professor Wordsmith writes: No.

Recently I was introduced to the wife of a peer of the realm at a party, who was very nice in her own way – of course, she wasn't a lady born and bred, she had only become a lady through marrying this peer of the realm, having been an estate agent beforehand. I believe – and when I asked her why her husband was called a peer of the realm, rather than just a peer, she was quite

unable to tell me. Nor did she seem to want to talk about her husband much – she was, however, very interesting about secret South American poisons and methods of inflicting death without leaving a mark – not a subject you would normally find a peeress clued up on! But as she talked, I could not help noticing that she had on one cheek a somewhat prominent mole out of which a single dark hair was growing, and it occurred to me for the very first time that I had often seen such moles in my life, with the single dark hair growing out of it – not near it, not beside it, but right in the middle of the mole, like a lone beech tree on one of those hillsides in the Chilterns, or along some of the Wiltshire ridges near the M4. There must be a technical name for such a mole. Do you know what it is?

Professor Wordsmith writes: Yes, there must be. No, I don't.

Keep those queries rolling in to Professor Wordsmith!

سكنا من الأجر

the commentators

Staring down the barrel of an American icon

As the Dunblane inquiry unfolds, the British are thinking about firearms – amid ominous signs of the US gun culture taking root

Let me take you through the standard operating procedure for a policeman who sees a minor traffic offence committed in one of the worst areas of an American city.

First he will pursue the offender, briefly dabbling his siren and flashing his swirling blue and red lights to indicate that the driver should stop. When – if – he does stop, the cop will draw up his big "cruiser" – usually a Chevrolet Caprice – behind the car and slightly off to one side. The officer then shines dazzling spotlights on all the rear view mirrors of the offender's car to prevent him from seeing anything going on behind. If the approach has to be from the front, a much more dangerous position, he will tell the driver to place his hands on the dashboard where they can be seen.

Any attempt by the driver to get out of the car will be met by an order, shouted through a loud-speaker, to stay where he is. There is then a pause while the officer taps the registration number of the car into his computer. This computer will already have logged the precise location of the incident. If anything

goes wrong, half a dozen other cruisers will descend on the spot and the computer will have produced an instant biography of whoever should be driving the offending car.

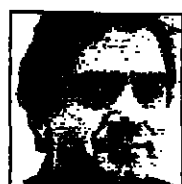
Finally the officer gets out and approaches the driver at an angle from the rear. He takes his licence and registration and returns to the cruiser to run elaborate computer checks. All this time the offender sits, immobile if he values his life and silhouetted in a brilliant pool of light. The atmosphere is rank with fear and suspicion. My skin – I am observing the incident in the front seat of the cruiser – is tingling with the anticipation of sudden violence, of the ambush that these cluttered alleys and rotting houses may, and sometimes do, conceal. And all this because a car had gone through a stop sign without stopping.

There is only one reason for this nightmarish ritual – guns. Guns are widely available in the United States and, as a result, even traffic law must be enforced in the worst inner city areas with the precautionary assumption that any driver might come out shooting.

Politicians, trapped by the

strength of the gun lobby with its illiterate and ahistorical reading of the constitutional "right to bear arms", can do nothing. They simply mouth platitudes about crime being caused by people, not guns. This claim is only partly true – a gun might well make a crime possible and, therefore, "cause" it – and, even if it were wholly true, since there will always be criminals, society must have a legitimate interest in limiting the damage they can do. Either way, on the matter of guns, American politicians talk flagrant nonsense and most of them, I suspect, know it. They are, therefore, implicated in the nightly carnage on American streets. Even as my officer was checking out this traffic offence, I heard on his radio of two shootings a few miles to the south of where I sat. It was an average night.

Yesterday, the Cullen inquiry into the Dunblane massacre opened: the British are thinking about guns. Of course, we can agree that the situation here is nothing like that in America. There is no legal right to bear arms, restrictions on ownership are relatively tight and, as a result, there are few areas in which the



BRYAN APPELEYARD

police must assume that they might, at any moment, be shot.

Nevertheless, those areas are expanding. Guns are finding their way into the hands of British criminals. And they want them, they love them. Guns are almost sacred objects of desire. For, though we haven't imported law from America, we have certainly imported its cultural icons. And, thanks to movies, television and the nightly news, the gun is the most potent of contemporary icons. We now have a gun problem, even if, for the moment, it resides primarily in the more diseased regions of our imaginations.

And the point about guns is that they change everything. Carrying a gun gives you an enlarged area of control and influence. You can take

action at a distance and, in a gun culture, you must assume that others are similarly capable. Your sense of the world is fundamentally altered. The gun redefines any environment as threatening and yourself as decisively able to respond. A gun transports you to a different realm of possibilities.

This is the world which Lord Cullen must consider. He must not be sidetracked by the more vaporous effusions that emerged in the immediate aftermath of Dunblane. All sorts of grand cultural generalisations can be constructed on speculations about the mind of Thomas Hamilton. Most will be wrong, but all will be irrelevant. Minds like that will always be with us. What counts here is the extent to which such psyches can find murderous expression in the environment in which they find themselves, and this must be Cullen's sole concern. Analyse certainly, understand maybe, but, above all, stop. Attempt, by whatever means, to remove the possibility.

Seen from this perspective, it is clear that Dunblane was about guns and only guns. Even if we could all

agree on the wider condition and recent history of society, we could do little about it. Even the more practical matter of school security is a by-product of the gunman's freedom of action at a distance. And, in any case, fortifying our schools is one more step down the road to inner city America where children pass through metal detectors on their way to class. Maybe we have to do it, but we shouldn't kid ourselves that it is the heart of the matter.

No, guns are the point. Guns empower and inflame psychosis, guns render feeble and inessential the complexities of human contact, guns "solve" problems in ways that are more language or even fists and knives can never do. Whose delicious, thrilling irony led to the Colt 45 being christened the "peace-maker"? The irony of these it killed.

So Cullen must confront the gun. He must also confront the fledgling gun lobby that exists in this country. Already we have heard the American argument that guns don't kill, people do – though, over here, its form is: no matter how tight the law, the bad guy will always get a gun if he really wants one. This is just as

corrupt as the American version since it casts the same hypocritical glow of respectability over an idea whose true form is: we want guns and you shouldn't try to stop us. In fact, there should be almost no limit to how far we should go to suppress guns. Perhaps farmers may really need them, but hunters don't. And shooting as sport is disgusting, a way of playing at killing. So, a few shotguns aside, there is no reason why we should not aim for a completely gun-free society.

Cullen should not evade this aspiration because it is now his job to affirm the possibility of such a society. The spread of illegal guns is a sign that, even with our restrictions, we are vulnerable to the possibility of a gun culture. The American example should teach us that now is the time to replace gun fascination with gun disgust. Of course, realistically we can accept that there will always be lines in the world that must be defended by men with guns. But, equally realistically, we can insist that no more lines should be drawn and certainly none that run past our school gates.

Don't swallow the Provos' line

Gerry Adams said recently, in his speech to the Sinn Féin Ard Fheis, that republicans had to engage in the battle of ideas. When Adams starts talking about "ideas", I have to work very hard to stop laughing. These guys are not interested in "ideas". Adams, and the Provisionals in general, have never had a single "idea" beyond nationalism.

By "ideas" Adams simply means strategic awareness. He is not seeking to persuade opponents (Unionists) that his "idea" is best, but is seeking to enlist nationalists in a broad strategy. It is within what is broadly and somewhat lazily referred to as nationalist Ireland that the battle of ideas will be fought.

Unionists are not stupid and are well aware of what is going on. Pan-nationalism, or the nationalist consensus, call it what you will, is the single most dangerous "idea" in Ireland today. The Provisionals in their own internal document said that they were prepared to opt for an unarmed strategy because they had got Fianna Fáil, the SDLP and Irish America to agree to their basic republican principles. Of course they still held on to their guns and Semtex. Why? Because they believe, and Martin McGuinness has said this publicly, that Unionists may resist, that there could be a backlash, but it would be fairly easy to "put down".

There cannot be real peace in Ireland until Irish nationalism stops trying to undermine the very existence of Northern Ireland. While nationalists and Provisionals differ only on the methods of subversion, an escalation is inevitable in the long term. Very little has changed inside the Provisional world and very little ever will. Provisionalism is a monster and will not be bought off or appeased. If constitutional nationalism does not disentangle itself we are likely heading for violence on a scale we have not yet seen. So why do people join the IRA? The tribal and sectarian

Sean O'Callaghan, a former IRA member, is serving 20 years for murder. As Northern Ireland goes to the polls, in preparation for possible all-party talks, he warns nationalists against any alliance with the IRA

nature of Northern Ireland ensures that there is no shortage of recruits. Family background often plays a part; close relatives may have been killed or imprisoned because of their republican activities. IRA in Northern Ireland do not, in my experience, join because of a considered rational decision to advance the IRA's goal of a 32-county Socialist Republic. The decision is invariably an emotional one. The experience of living in

Provisionalism is a monster and will not be bought off or appeased

ghetto areas where the IRA are seen as defenders against the "prods and the Brits" must never be underestimated. Joining the IRA in certain republican areas is regarded as an honourable, sometimes the only honourable thing to do.

Peer pressure, status within the community. The attraction of the "secret army" and the excitement thereby engendered in young lives otherwise deprived of hope or passion for the future. These are the factors that propel uneducated and immature young people into the ranks of the IRA. A simplistic version of Irish (nationalist) history imbibed at home and school does the rest, providing the nec-

essary historical and moral cocoon that justifies, in the minds of IRA volunteers, the most revolting acts of violence. A clear distinction should be made between the broad republican leadership and the young cannon fodder on the ground who do the dirty work for that utterly cynical leadership. Maximum blame for the obscenity that is Provisionalism must be placed where it belongs, at the door of Adams, McGuinness and the other leading strategists.

Why do people leave the IRA? Fear of imprisonment and violent death. Some are not "tough" enough for the violence. Sometimes a long period of imprisonment provides time for reflection but this is unusual. The IRA tends to keep a very tight hold on its prisoners. Prison is where the real political indoctrination takes place; where the "soft" are separated from the "hard core". Marriage sometimes breaks the link; a partner may not share the same views. The arrival of children can sometimes bring a maturity. But, in terms of IRA volunteers in Northern Ireland, family and community pressures often militate against a clean break. Often it is only by leaving the area – not so easy – that people find the courage to leave it all behind them.

Up until now I have concentrated on IRA recruits from Northern Ireland. There are clear distinctions between them and IRA volunteers from the Irish Republic. In the south, community or peer pressure



The decision to join the IRA is, invariably, an emotional one, says O'Callaghan (pictured above), himself a former member. Main photograph: PA

does not exist. There are no republican ghettos, no "Brits" or "prods" to hate. We are left, almost invariably, with a family history of republican involvement. The historical legacy of a state brought into being by republican violence is powerful: the notion that "Brits" only understand force.

I was born in County Kerry in the Irish Republic and joined the IRA at 15 in 1970. Why? Youthful adventurism, misguided idealism, the emotional impact of the pogroms of 1969. The experience of meeting Catholic refugees who fled south after being burned out of their homes in Belfast. A family history soaked in republicanism. The entire nationalist/republican ethos which reigned unchallenged in the Ireland of youth. Any number of reasons explain my joining up, but of course it was me that committed murder. My fault. I alone take the blame for that.

Why did I leave? Because nothing in my background had prepared me for the awful sectarianism that fuels northern nationalism fundamentalists. It is that "hard edge" which often distinguishes southern from northern IRA volunteers. After about 18 months in Northern Ireland I realised that I was taking part in a sectarian war directed primarily against the Protestant, Unionist people of Northern Ireland. So I resigned.



So what should be done to about the IRA? The Prevention of Terrorism Act (PTA), or something similar, is absolutely necessary in the fight against terrorism. I have never met anybody who joined the IRA because of the PTA. I never heard it discussed within the IRA at any level. The PTA is necessary but it will not, of itself, stop IRA attacks in Britain.

Most IRA attacks in Britain originate from the Irish Republic. In the absence of vigorous action against the IRA in the Irish Republic, it is even more necessary that the British police

should have the power to protect people from terrorists.

Until a clear and co-ordinated strategy against terrorism, involving the security forces in Northern Ireland, the Irish Republic and mainland Britain, is formulated, the IRA will continue to have the capacity to bomb England almost at their leisure.

A longer version of this article is published in the June edition of 'New Dialogue' News. £1 obtainable from 22 Westwood Avenue, Middlesbrough, Cleveland TS5 5PY.

Are Gazza's in-flight antics his last hurrah?

Age is catching up on football's fool in a shell-suit. Who will be the jester's successor, asks Jim White

Every four years, Australia's test cricketers board a plane in Sydney heading for the Ashes tour of England. Once strapped into their seats, the months of rigorous preparation begin to pay off as they embark on the biggest venture of their sporting lives, the ultimate test to prove they are the finest-ever examples of Australian manhood ever to leave their shores: the four-yearly challenge to drink the in-flight trolley dry.

The Aussie Ashes boozathon is now steeped in as much tradition and arcana as the game itself. Bearded statisticians will be able to tell you which left-hander consumed the most banana daiquiris between Singapore and Abu Dhabi. The big title, however, is held by David Boon. Before the last Ashes tour here in 1993, the moustache-chirped batsman set a new all-comers' record when he drank a staggering 57 cans of lager while still airborne.

In comparison to Boon, Paul Gascoigne is an amateur in-flight boozier, his experience limited to short hops from Rome, a couple of sniffs of a holgers' apron sufficient to addle his brain. Yet, while Boon can consume most of the output of Tobey's brewery on a plane without a hint of press interest, the moment Gazza hosts a

party in first class it is all over the front pages.

The headlines roared with indignation yesterday as the Georgie lad's antics on the return flight from the England football team's tour to the Far East provoked a bout of hand-wringing hysteria everywhere from the Daily Express to the Tory backbenches.

The point is David Boon doesn't provoke press inquiry because he isn't Gazza. In-flight lager excess apart, Boon displays little of interest to the headline-writing world. He has never, for instance, stuck his tongue out at the camera during the singing of the national anthem; has never, when asked by a Scandinavian journalist if he had a message for Norwegians everywhere, suggested that they can all f--- off; has never, when challenged by the News of the World over allegations that he had enjoyed a three-in-a-bed romp with a model and her friend, responded that the girl couldn't count because, as he recalled, his mate Terry was in there as well. Boon is just a sportsman who, every four years, has a few drinks on a plane. What Paul Gascoigne did to celebrate his 29th birthday aboard a Cathay Pacific 747 was something else entirely: it was Gazza having a few drinks on a plane.

Like the poor, Gazza is always with

us, forever providing us with an opportunity for moral outrage. His very name has come to symbolise all those aspects of our national character we find most embarrassing, the ones which provide the most opportunity for self-flagellation, traits like yobbery, drunkenness and wearing shell-suit trousers in first class.

Like the poor, Gazza is always with us, provoking moral outrage

And the great thing about Gazza is that he is incorrigible. For six years, since he burst into our consciousness at the 1990 World Cup, he has maintained his high output of outbursts: swearing, belching, wife-abusing. He may have earned enough to keep Jimmy Five Bellies in beer for a lifetime, but money has not softened him; he may have spent three years in Rome, but not for a moment did any of the eternal city's sophistication rub off on to his wobbly jowls; he may have spent the last year in Scotland, well away from Fleet Street and its spies, yet a steady stream of Gazza stories have percolated southwards. Nothing

he does is original, nothing fresh, nothing as revelatory or damaging as some of his colleagues' drug and bribery escapades. It is the steady drip drip of silly Gazza-ness which is the essence that keeps us entertained.

The worrying thing about this latest Gazza controversy is, however, the sense that it might be his last hurrah. Now 29 and slowed by injury, Euro 96 may well provide his final big chance to behave childishly before, during or after a major tournament. Yobbery commentators everywhere are exercising themselves with the important question: who can follow the boy?

English football has traditionally done its bit to encourage a state of advanced puerility in its protagonists. The very seating arrangements during Gazza's flight were instructive. While the lads were billeted on the top deck of the plane, Terry Venables and the other FA officials were on the lower, indulgent grown-ups abscenting themselves downstairs while the kids partied above their heads. The Far East tour was, according to Venables, a great opportunity to cement team spirit, which is football-speak for getting legless together.

Yet an influx of continental players with their fancy ideas about diet and how the athlete's body should not be

abused by Australian levels of alcohol input are threatening the yob production line. Vinnie Jones, for instance, the man who once bit off a reporter's nose, has let it be known he has been inspired by Eric Cantona's new-found self-control to rein in his own excesses.

There are redoubts of yobbery – Nottingham Forest players getting frisky on a summer tour to Spain, Robbie Fowler being naughty in hotel rooms – but few have yet to show Gazza's astonishing consistency. Worse, England's new generation of leading lads show little sign of even trying to emulate him. Potential successors like Jamie Redknapp, David James and Steve McManaman, who call themselves the Liverpool Hombres and spend unfeasible amounts on smart suits, smarter cars and even smarter entertainments, would never allow themselves to be photographed wearing a pair of false breasts while standing on the top deck of an open bus. No chance: it might scupper their latest modelling contract.

Indeed when Gazza goes, we may well have to look to another sport to find a fool to vilify. Fortunately, then, for cricket's public image that David Boon is to retire before next year's Ashes tour.

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Scottish tipped to raise water stakes

MICHAEL HARRISON

Scottish Power was last night being tipped to raise the stakes again in the bid battle for Southern Water by topping the £1.6bn agreed offer tabled by the neighbouring utility Southern Electric.

Meanwhile, it emerged that the Southern Electric bid, if successful, could lead to 1,000 job losses among the combined workforce of 10,500 and the closure of Southern Water's Worthing headquarters in West Sussex.

As Southern Electric moved into the market, paying £15m for a stake of just under 10 per cent in Southern Water, the City was divided on whether Scottish Power would escalate the bid battle. Some analysts speculated that it might turn its attention to another water company. But the favoured view was that the Scottish utility would increase its terms from the £1.56bn hostile bid launched on Tuesday. However, Scottish Power is under no pressure to rebid immediately and is likely to bide its time before moving.

Adam Forsyth of stockbrokers NatWest Markets, said: "There are advantages and strategic logic in both bids. On balance it is more likely that Scottish Power will up the ante."

He estimates that a merger of Southern Electric and Southern Water would produce cost savings of £45m a year. The savings for Scottish Power would be lower at £30m but a successful takeover would increase its customer base by two million and give it access to the gas and electricity markets in the south of England.

Last night Scottish Power issued a statement attacking Southern Electric's offer and reiterating its commitment to a multi-utility strategy "but only on terms which create value for shareholders".

Murray Stuart, Scottish Power's chairman, said the rival bid was "reactive, defensive and does not enhance competition". His chief executive, Ian Robinson, added that the move amounted to a "strategy on the rebound" following its failure to merge with National Power and did nothing for customers while offering the prospect of significant job losses below board level.

Southern Electric hit back immediately, saying: "Scottish Power's statement completely misses the point which is that we have come out with a higher offer which has been recommended by the Southern Water board."

Southern Electric is offering 0.526 shares and £6.31 in cash



Complementary skills: Geoffrey Wilson, Southern Electric chairman (left) and William Courtney, Southern Water chairman Photograph: Colin McKillop

for every Southern Water share, valuing its offer at £10.03 a share at last night's closing price. There is a cash alternative of 975.7p.

Scottish Power's cash and shares offer is worth £9.74 a share at last night's closing price. Its full cash alternative is worth 935.7p.

If the Southern Electric bid succeeds it would create a merged utility with 2.6 million

customers covering an area with a population of 8 million stretching from the North Sea coastline of Kent across to Weymouth in Dorset.

But there would also be job losses in the two companies' core regulated businesses because of duplication in metering, billing and information technology functions. The two companies share about 700,000 customers - more than a quarter

of Southern Electric's domestic market. A merger could save perhaps £25m in annual salaries and £20m in IT costs. But Jim Forbes of Southern Electric, who would become chief executive officer of the combined group, insisted that the merger was not a defensive move to protect its own market. The objective was to grow the customer base by as much as 4 million, creating jobs in the

process in both the regulated and non-regulated divisions of the two companies.

Southern Electric said it had been holding general discussions with its neighbouring utility for more than a year but had only begun talking serious merger terms last Friday when it became known that Scottish Power was preparing to make an offer. Mr Forbes said: "The business sense in this deal

stands out like sore thumb."

But Scottish Power's Ian Robinson said: "In the last two years Southern Electric has failed to merge with Midlands Electricity, has failed to acquire Sweb and in its attempt to be taken over by National Power. This latest move is strategy on the rebound: a huge into a new sector within weeks of it recommending the National Power bid."

Comment, page 21

Bid fever boosts shares

MICHAEL HARRISON

Shares in water companies raced ahead yesterday as takeover fever spilled into the rest of the sector amid speculation that other electricity groups and overseas utilities were preparing to pounce.

Among the rumoured bidders were PowerGen and National Power, both of which have been barred from acquiring regional electricity companies, Eastern Group, now part of Hanson, and French and US utilities.

Anglian Water saw its shares rise 27p to 599p while Severn Trent was up 34p at 595p. Thames rose 35p at 599p and Wessex Water rose 28p to 360p.

Alan Smith, chief executive of Anglian, one of the favoured takeover targets, sought to dampen bid speculation, saying: "We have had no approaches ourselves and, while we constantly monitor the water and other utilities we have not seen any deal which would benefit our shareholders. We would move if we saw something that was right but we haven't yet."

Anglian and Eastern had examined a merger, he added, but decided that it was not worth paying the bid premium required.

Mr Smith was speaking as Anglian unveiled a 4 per cent rise in pre-tax profits last year to £238.6m and a 15 per cent increase in the dividend for the year to 30p.

Despite being the driest area of the UK with rain levels in some places on a par with Israel and Morocco, Anglian survived last summer's drought without even a hosepipe ban.

Soaring Prism renews rail sale attack

MAGNUS GRIMOND

The Government's controversial railway privatisation came under renewed attack yesterday as Prism Rail, the UK's first pure railway company to be quoted since the 1940s, saw its shares more than double on the first day of dealings yesterday.

Earlier this month, it won the franchise for the London, Tilbury and Southend "miserable line" after the original management team were dropped amidst allegations of fraud.

Prism's shares soared from the 100p price at which they were placed on the Alternative Investment Market to end the day at 205p, valuing the company at £20m and chairman Godfrey Burley's stake at around £1.2m.

But the windfall for Prism shareholders, coming a week after shares in the Jarvis construction group soared on news it had acquired a former British Rail maintenance company, drew criticism that the LTS franchise had been sold on the cheap.

Jonathan Bray, co-ordinator of campaign group Save Our Railways commented: "It's no surprise that Prism's shares are going up when they plan to run fewer services than British Rail and charge the taxpayer more for doing it."

"Today's news typifies all that's wrong with privatisation - the cost to the taxpayer in extra

subsidy increases, while profits for companies like Prism go through the roof."

"If Labour are elected we will be pressing them to ensure that all the £2bn annual subsidy to the rail industry goes into improving services, not into lining the pockets of the likes of Prism."

Labour was, however, more

cautious yesterday. Its spokesman on rail, Brian Wilson, said Prism's main costs, track access charges and train leasing, were fixed. "It is hard to see where else the industry's profits are going to come from other than staff cuts and fare increases."

Meanwhile, Opra, the rail regulator in charge of franchising, defended its decision to

award the LTS route to Prism. A spokesman said the company's bid to run the service at a cost of £29.5m in the 1996-97 financial year, dropping to £11.2m in 2010-2011, the last year of the franchise, was "significantly" less than BR's offer, which was worth £34.6m in the current year. The company's offer was also below the management team's bid and had also been tested against third-party bidders.

"If the market thinks it an attractive company to invest in, then the market must decide for itself. But they have promised to bring in new services, buy new rolling stock, open a new station at West Ham and improve passenger charter standards, all for significantly less money," the spokesman added.

Tim Worledge, a director of Williams de Broe, nominated sponsors and advisers to the company's AIM listing, denied they had got the pricing wrong. "It was placed in our view at the right sort of level. A majority of shareholders wanted to stay aboard."

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Just the ticket: Godfrey Burley, chairman of Prism Rail (left), who became a paper millionaire, and Bob Howells, chairman of LTS Rail Photograph: Edward Webb

Cuban pull-out increases pressure on UK bosses

PHIL DAVISON

Miami

The prospect of leading British businessmen being barred from entering the US grew yesterday as the first big company began pulling out of Cuba in response to a controversial new Washington law against investment in the communist-led Caribbean island.

Under the so-called Helms-Burton law, companies doing business in Cuba, including British firms such as tobacco giant BAT and sugar trader ED and F Man, could later be ordered to give up their holdings in Cuba or face charges in the US. Company directors could also be refused US visas, even for holidays.

US and Mexican officials said Cemex, one of the world's largest cement producers, had terminated a contract under which it managed a plant with the Cuban authorities in the town of Mariel. The company

had begun pulling its staff out of Cuba, the officials said.

Cemex's billionaire chief executive Lorenzo Zambrano was reported last week to be on a US "black list" of those perceived as the biggest violators of the new legislation.

US officials said Mr Zambrano was likely to be among those receiving a warning letter from the US State Department, saying he might be barred from the US for "trafficking" with Cuba.

By "trafficking," the law means engaging in joint ventures with Fidel Castro's communist regime on property confiscated by the Cuban president after his 1959 revolution. The Mariel plant managed by Cemex, for example, is claimed by an American firm, Lone Star Industries.

The law, signed by President Bill Clinton in February after Cuba shot down two American civilian light aircraft in the Florida Straits, has opened a

Pandora's Box of possible future litigation in the US over who owns what in Cuba.

Foreign firms operating in Cuba can be sued in the US for using property confiscated by Mr Castro's regime - which includes virtually every farm and factory.

The governments of the countries with most investments on the island - mainly Mexico, Canada and the European Union - have strongly protested against the law as contrary to free trade agreements.

US officials said the first warning letters to the "worst violators" were being sent out yesterday to three large investors - Mexican telephone company Grupo Doms, Canadian mining company Sherritt International Corporation and Italian phone company Stet.

The officials said Stet's investment involved "trafficking" in property owned before the revolution by US electronics conglomerate ITT.

Granada dismisses Forte's 'cherry-picking' bid

MATHEW HORSMAN

Granada, the media and leisure giant, has rejected out of hand what insiders dismissed as a "cherry-picking" £1bn bid by Sir Rocco Forte for a selection of Granada's Exclusive and Meridian hotels.

Sir Rocco made his formal offer for most of the Meridian chain and some of the Exclusive late last week, but informed sources within Granada said the price was between 20 per cent and 30 per cent below the valuations Granada had established for the properties.

In a statement released last night, Sir Rocco said: "I am

sorry Granada has decided not to follow up what we consider to be a good offer."

Sir Rocco, who earlier this year lost a bitter battle for his family company, Forte, could call upon as much as £2bn to buy back some of the hotels he said in the £3.9bn takeover, sources in the Forte camp said.

Backing Sir Rocco are venture capital firms CinVen, Pru Venture Management and Electra Fleming. JP Morgan has arranged debt financing, with the support of Midland, SBC Warburg and UBS.

The offer was formally rejected by Granada on Wednesday. A close source to Granada

said: "Given the nature of [Sir Rocco's] backing, and the returns that venture capital firms demand, it is unlikely that he could have bid a price acceptable to Granada and kept his investors happy."

A source close to Sir Rocco said: "He has obviously put together a plan for buying hotels, and he knows this business well. It seems clear that financial institutions are comfortable with the valuations he has put on the hotels he would like to buy."

Granada last week confirmed it would sell by auction 17 Exclusive hotels but would retain the Meridian hotel chain, on the

books at about £900m. A sales memorandum containing details of the auction has already been sent to some prospective buyers.

Granada is prepared to entertain bids for individual properties, or for groups of properties, but has precise targets in mind for the range of luxury hotels, which include the Grosvenor House in London and Westbury in New York.

"We were happy to entertain [Sir Rocco's] offer, but were not interested in a cherry-picking exercise," a source familiar with the sale talks said. "We believe that we can generate better value for Granada shareholders

by keeping and developing the Meridian hotels."

The City expects Granada to review its policy on Meridian at a later date, possibly selling the chain once yields have improved.

A Granada source said yesterday that the company was open to an offer from Sir Rocco for the properties it has identified for sale. But Sir Rocco, whose aim is to rebuild a chain of upmarket hotels, said: "We have no interest in buying the Exclusive hotels without Meridian but have many other opportunities available to pursue."

It is believed that yields at the Exclusive are sharply lower than those at Meridian, but

Granada still expects to send out more than 100 sales memoranda in the next few days.

The sale of the Exclusive hotels marks the start of a massive disposal programme at Granada, which is aiming to pay down the debt it took on to win its takeover of Forte. It has also earmarked Forte's 68 per cent stake in the Savoy Group of hotels, as well as a stake in Alpha Airports and Forte's chain of Welcome Break motorway service areas.

It is keeping Forte's mid-market and budget hotels, as well as the chain of roadside restaurants trading as Happy Eater and Little Chef.

Windfall due for dairy farmers

MAGNUS GRIMOND

Nearly 30,000 dairy farmers are set for a windfall of between £7,000 and £10,000 each following the flotation of Dairy Crest, the marketing arm of the old Milk Marketing Board - best known for its Clover spreads and Yoplait yoghurts.

Dairy Crest, whose market debut was prevented two years ago by the upheaval in the milk market following deregulation, is expected to be valued at between £200m and £250m following the listing of the company in August.

Sir Derek Andrews, chairman of the Residuary Milk Marketing Board, which now owns Dairy Crest on behalf of dairy farmers, revealed that they had been approached over the past few months about a trade sale for all or part of the group.

Although these approaches never got to the stage of discussing a price, they were rejected in favour of a flotation. "Although other methods of disposal were not excluded, there was a clear presumption in the legislation in favour of floating Dairy Crest," he said.

One of Dairy Crest's main considerations was that a majority of producers, and certainly the National Farmers' Union, had expressed a preference in favour of setting up Dairy Crest as an independent third force

alongside existing dairy companies, Sir Derek added.

Dairy Crest will rank behind Northern Foods, owner of Express Dairies, and roughly equal with Unigate in the dairy food sector. A proportion of shares, expected to be between 25 and 30 per cent, will be placed with City institutions, raising the £60m necessary to repay debts to so-called rolling fund producers who had part of the proceeds of milk sales in the 1993/94 financial year withheld by the old MMB.

Around 28,000 rolling fund producers who are also so-called eligible producers, those registered under the milk marketing scheme in 1992/93, will benefit from the sale, plus a further 1,400 farmers who fall into one category or the other.

Dairy Crest has been transformed over the past six years, with the sale or closure of many of its creameries and doorstep delivery depots as it concentrated on higher added value areas such as spreads, yoghurts and mature cheddar.

Profits have fluctuated under the impact of massive restructuring provisions, the loss of parts of the business and pressure on margins as a result of deregulation.

Yesterday it reported a 10 per cent rise in the pre-tax total to £37.4m for the year to March. Investment column, page 22

STOCK MARKETS				
FT-SE 100	Dow Jones	Nikkei		
25,000	5,700	22,500		
24,500	5,600	21,800		
24,000	5,500	21,000		
23,500	5,400	20,200		
23,000	5,300	19,400		
22,500	5,200	18,600		
22,000	5,100	17,800		
21,500	5,000	17,000		
21,000	4,900	16,200		
20,500	4,800	15,400		
20,000	4,700	14,600		
19,500	4,600	13,800		
19,000	4,500	13,000		
18,500	4,400	12,200		
18,000	4,300	11,400		
17,500	4,200	10,600		
17,000	4,100	9,800		
16,500	4,000	9,000		
16,000	3,900	8,200		
15,500	3,800	7,400		
15,000	3,700	6,600		
14,500	3,600	5,800		
14,000	3,500	5,000		
13,500	3,400	4,200		
13,000	3,300	3,400		
12,500	3,200	2,600		
12,000	3,100	1,800		
11,500	3,000	1,000		
11,000	2,900	200		
10,500	2,800			
10,000	2,700			
9,500	2,600			
9,000	2,500			
8,500	2,400			
8,000	2,300			
7,500	2,200			
7,000	2,100			
6,500	2,000			
6,000	1,900			
5,500	1,800			
5,000	1,700			
4,500	1,600			
4,000	1,500			
3,500	1,400			
3,000	1,300			
2,500	1,200			
2,000	1,100			
1,500	1,000			
1,000	900			
500	800			
0	700			

INTEREST RATES							
Short sterling*		UK medium gilt	US long bond				
* See last column on page 10							
Money Market Rates		Bond Yields *					
Rate	1 Month	1 Year	Medium Bond (%)	Year Ago	Long Bond	Q4 Year Ago	
UK	6.00	5.38	8.06	7.32	8.18	7.98	
US	5.38	5.78	8.67	6.92	8.86	8.66	
Japan	0.50	0.91	6.19	2.73	-	-	
Germany	3.38	3.21	4.42	6.65	7.04	-	
Bondwatch Indices							
MAIN PRICE CHANGES							
	Price (¢)	Change (¢)	Change (%)	Falls	Price (¢)	Change (¢)	% Change
Yorkshire Water	759	68	9.9	Scotts Hides	710	23	3.1
Thames Water	360	28	8.4	Rip Mining	593	16	2.6
Deeside Water	698	25	3.2	Southern Electric	207	19	2.6

A fight to the death in theatre of the absurd

COMMENT

'Would it not be better to beat a statesman-like retreat now and bid for somebody else? After all, there are plenty of other English water companies, lots more fish in the pond'

The battle for Southern Water looks like developing into theatre of the absurd. Pointless and wasteful though fight-to-the-death duels invariably prove, neither Scottish Power or Southern Electric is likely to back off. The prices being bid stretch credulity. As the stakes rise, there is every prospect of the winner seriously overpaying. From this side of the fence at least, both offers look equally questionable. Scottish Power's bid is little more than a glorious piece of management empire-building south of the border, a noble enough cause no doubt, but of no ultimate value to anyone. And Southern Electric's bid looks defensive, half-hearted and a little bit desperate. It probably wouldn't be bidding at all but for the threatened Scottish encroachment on its territory. Certainly its claim that "the business sense of the deal sticks out like a sore thumb" is curious. If that were the case why did Southern consider merging with Midlands Electricity, then daily with South Western Electricity, and finally get to the stage of reading the banns with National Power only for Ian Lang to put his oar in. It now emerges that all these alternatives were no more than flirtatious preparations for the "real thing", that attractive young lass from next door, Southern Water.

Whatever Southern's management now thinks, its own shareholders are feeling just a little bit uncomfortable. Overnight Southern's position has been transformed from bid target to bidder. Not many months ago,

investors were being offered £9.60 a share by National Power. Yesterday its bankers were underwriting a bid for Southern Water at 655p a share. A few sore thumbs there.

With 10 per cent of the stock now firmly in the Southern Electric camp, Scottish plainly has a bit of a hill to climb. Would it not be better to beat a statesman-like retreat now and bid for somebody else? After all, there are plenty of other English water companies, lots more fish in the pond. Here are two reasons why Scottish is unlikely to be following this course – not unless there is a sudden rush of common sense to the head, anyway. One is that much time and effort has already been invested in bidding for Southern Water. It would be just too exhausting to start all over again. Another is that even if it did, Scottish could easily find itself in exactly the same position, with the water company of choice receiving a defensive bid from the local electricity company. So fight to the death it is. Southern Water's shareholders must be finding it hard to believe their luck. What fun.

When Swiss analysis goes completely cuckoo

Well, there's a thing. The two Swiss organisations which used jointly to produce the only serious attempt to rank countries by their competitiveness have this year gone their own separate ways. And yes,

they have come up with startlingly different findings. With the benefit of hindsight, the World Economic Forum's divorce from the Institute for International Management Development was perhaps inevitable for the two seem to have radically different views of what matters in economic success.

You could characterise their respective standpoints as a Conservative world view and a Labour world-view. The WEF thinks flexibility, minimal government and openness of the economy are the most important factors in competitiveness and future growth. Much of the analysis of the UK's competitive improvement in its report today will be backed by tomorrow's survey of the British economy from the OECD.

The IMD puts its faith more heavily in investment, skills and infrastructure, just like the shadow Chancellor Gordon Brown. So Britain has gone down in the IMD league even as it has gone up in WEF rankings. If these conflicting findings mean anything at all, it is the idiosyncrasy of trying to sum up an economy's competitiveness in a single and necessarily arbitrary number. For there are several equally important dimensions to international advantage. One is the ability to export. Factors such as the level of the exchange rate, the costs of production and the absence of tariffs and other barriers to trade are what matter here.

A second is the ability to attract international investment. This is influenced by, for instance, geography and infrastructure, the

tax and welfare system and the cost and quality of the workforce. Then there is the question of a country's ability to deliver rising prosperity to its citizens. Education, investment and entrepreneurship are what matter here.

There is nothing wrong with benchmarking. It has proved useful at a corporate level and there is no reason why it should not be applied constructively at the national level too. Equally it would be wrong to see the differing findings of these two competitiveness leagues as evidence of their worthlessness. If you disaggregate what lies behind them, they are not at odds with each other. It makes perfect sense to say the UK scores well on openness and competition but badly on education and skills.

The daftness comes in the headline-seeking rankings which try to summarise a country in a single ill-defined number. Up three or down four places? In front of or behind Finland? The answer is as irrelevant as it is meaningless.

'Misery line' produces plenty of cheer

Somebody clearly knows something about rail franchises that the government appears to have missed. Shares in Prism, the first train operating company to be quoted on the stock market since nationalisation of the railways in 1947, doubled on their first

day of trading on the AIM market, an amazing start for the new owner of the notorious "misery line" from London to Tilbury and Southend. It was a far from miserable day for the new owners of the line, who were the second time winners.

A management buyout team was kicked out in February, after allegations of ticketing fraud, and the franchise process had to start again. Some of the premium can be explained away by the mania for new issues at the moment. But not all.

Basically what it means is that the City thinks there's a big profit to be had in them there trains.

This is a touch embarrassing for Sir George Young, the transport secretary, because it suggests that at the first public test the market thinks he is selling franchises on the cheap – or rather with too high a subsidy, since potential franchisees compete on the level of government grant they judge can make an operation viable. In the case of the misery line, the initial subsidy is more than half the revenues, of £54m last year.

By cutting costs and jobs, introducing more flexible working for drivers and other staff, and no doubt raising fares where the rail regulator and passenger resistance permit, Prism could shortly be delivering all the state subsidy and some into the hands of shareholders. The City clearly thinks the scope for cost cuts and profit in these franchises dramatically bigger than the Government thought.

Two top international forecasters have reached widely differing views of Britain's competitiveness. How come?

DIANE COYLE
Economics Editor

Britain has jumped three places higher in the world competitiveness league, pulling ahead of all other EU countries except Denmark, according to a report published today.

However, the finding contrasts with a rival league table published earlier this week which showed Britain slipping back, overtaken by Finland and Chile.

The two leagues also come up with different winners, with the US falling to fourth place behind Singapore, Hong Kong and New Zealand in today's report, but remaining top ahead of the two Asian countries in the earlier one.

Germany's competitiveness

ranking has fallen in both cases, while Japan's is lower in one of the tables.

The more optimistic assessment of British competitiveness today comes from the World Economic Forum, an international business organisation. Jeffrey Sachs, an eminent Harvard University professor, argues in its report that government regulation and big welfare states act as a hindrance to countries' growth prospects.

Britain therefore scores high relative to other European countries for its flexible labour market and low state pension burden. It climbs from 18th to 15th in the WEF's ratings.

However, Germany slips from sixth to 22nd in its league

table. The WEF report comments: "Germany, together with many of its partners in the EU, ranks especially poorly in government and market flexibility."

A competing competitiveness league published earlier this week by the Institute for International Management Development, a Swiss business school that collaborated with the WEF until this year, showed Britain dropping to 19th place from 15th last year and 11th seven years ago. The UK suffered from weak scores on the quality of management and workforce in the IMD's rankings, although the researchers rated it highly for information technology and telecommunications.

Stéphane Garelli, a professor at the IMD and University of Lausanne, said uneven reforms over a period of many years meant the standard of living in Britain had fallen.

Both of the rival competitiveness scores combine hundreds of different measures ranging from economic figures such as GDP per head and national savings to structural measures such as the number of mobile phones and competence of managers. The differences arise from the different weights they give to the various measures.

The World Economic Forum places heavy weight on openness to international trade and investment and on flexibility. Its report notes: "Five of the six most competitive nations are small, open economies with relatively small governments and low tax rates."

The United States comes in at number four, well ahead of Japan and Germany, while all the Asian "tiger economies" make the top 20. Eastern European nations – many advised in their economic reforms by Professor Sachs – and Latin American countries cluster at the bottom of the league.

"These countries have not yet created the conditions to ensure sustained high rates of economic growth," the report says. The competing IMD rankings also favour the dynamic Asian economies. They take six out of the top ten places, though the US remains at the top. Professor Garelli agreed that Germany's position had been affected by the crisis in its public finances and by high costs on business.

Comment, this page

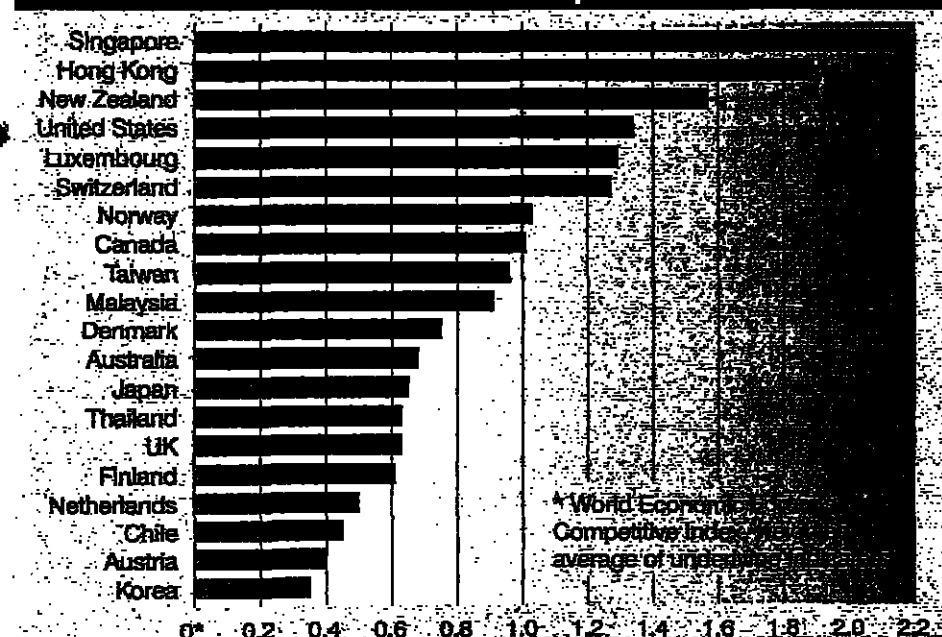
Two leading research groups have reached opposite conclusions

World Economic Forum

Institute for Management Development

- UK UP from 18th to 15th place
- UK moves ahead of Germany
- UK benefits from labour market deregulation, flexible, low
- Per capita investment in telecommunications high in UK
- Quality of UK road and rail infrastructure weak (low density per capita)
- UK has relatively high spending on R&D by firms, high level of patents granted
- Quality of UK management low
- Singapore and Hong Kong top world league, US down from 1st to 4th, Japan from 4th to 13th, Germany from 6th to 22nd
- Russia least competitive
- UK DOWN from 15th to 19th place.
- UK languishes behind Germany
- Mixed performances by other EU countries
- UK suffers from labour market low skills and motivation costs
- UK government support for telecommunications low
- Quality of UK roads and rail infrastructure good
- UK weak on scientific education and no of qualified engineers
- Quality of UK management low
- US, Singapore, HK remain top three, Germany down from 5th to 10th
- Russia least competitive

The 20 most competitive



IN BRIEF

German engineering firm KHD has filed a complaint against 15 people, including its deputy chairman, in a case of fraud that could cost the company DM650m (\$420.4m), prosecutors said. That is twice as high as Kloeckner-Humboldt-Deutz's total equity, making it difficult for the company's main shareholder, Deutsche Bank, to step in with financial assistance, analysts said. KHD cited the damages figure in a criminal complaint it filed late on Tuesday. Prosecutors are investigating top KHD employees on suspicion of fraud and embezzlement. KHD has suspended the chairman of its Humboldt Wedag unit, Paul Hochschofer, who is also deputy chairman of the KHD group, and Wedag board members Lutz Hartmann, in charge of finances, and Hans Juergen Gaertner, director of cement plant operations. KHD chief finance officer Klaus Edelmann has taken on responsibility for Wedag's operations.

Japan's industrial output rose 3.9 per cent in April from March, the Ministry of International Trade and Industry said. This followed a 0.6 per cent fall in March. Miti forecast output will climb 3.4 per cent in May, more than its previous estimate. June output is likely to fall because there will be fewer working days. A ministry official said output "maintained its gradual recovery trend".

The French cabinet approved a bill that paves the way for the sale of a 49 per cent stake in France Telecom but leaves control with the government. Telecommunications minister Francois Fillon said that the sale of shares in the company would probably take place in the first half of 1997.

France's trade gap widened in March. The seasonally adjusted trade surplus reached Fr12.1bn (£1.53bn), far higher than the expected Fr9bn.

Seagram's first-quarter net income more than halved to \$23m from \$59m, way below expectations. Revenues almost doubled to \$2.5bn from \$1.3bn but the figures are not directly comparable because Seagram last year sold its stake in DuPont chemicals for \$3.2bn and bought an 80 per cent stake in film and entertainment company MCA for \$5.7bn.

Shares in Novell fell as the US networking software company reported worse-than-expected second-quarter results. The company ran up losses of \$0.15 per share, almost twice the level of consensus Wall Street estimates. Novell cited a \$225 million inventory reduction for the loss.

Christies International's sales in the six months to June are likely to be at a similar level as in the comparable period, the auction group told its annual shareholders' meeting yesterday. The art market continues to be firm. The success rate of sales, measured by the proportion of lots sold to lots offered, had continued to improve. But it warned that 1995 benefited from the consignment of several very valuable collections.

Carlton targets 'lifestyle' for cable TV

MATHEW HORSMAN
Media Editor

Carlton, Michael Green's media company, plans a new strand of lifestyle programming for Cable Select, its cable channel, and is aiming to nearly double the number of hours it broadcasts on cable television.

The new service, which might run from noon until 5pm, is likely to feature food shows, home decoration and other "lifestyle" themes attractive to daytime audiences, much of it original programming produced at the company's Nottingham studios.

The new service would proceed the current schedule of evening programmes, which include repeats of *Birds of a Feather* and *Lovely Joe*. The project is part of Carlton's declared intention to grow organically, rather than through big, often expensive acquisitions in the media sector. "Whilst the opportunities for investing beyond our existing business may be extensive, the prices required are often very demanding," Michael Green said in a statement yesterday as he announced interim profits ahead 19 per cent to £143m in the six months to 31 March.

Mr Green added that recent investments in television, including TV stations in France, India and Singapore, were an example of exploring "the tangible opportunities [that] lie within our existing businesses".

Mr Green warned analysts against expecting a big acquisition in the near future. Carlton has been suggested as a predator for many potential media targets, most recently HTV, ITV franchise-holder for Wales and the West, and Mirror Group, publishers of the Mirror newspaper titles.

The sector has been rife with takeover speculation in advance of further liberalisation of ownership rules, as promised in the new Broadcasting Bill.

Carlton is also a partner, with Mirror, in a consortium bidding for the rights to the Premier League. But it is understood the group is offering a revenue-sharing deal with the 20 League clubs, and would not necessarily put up much of the £80m over five years expected to be generated by the new rights deal.

Analysts were surprised by the strength of profit growth in the first half, which was struck on turnover up 6 per cent to £847.8m, and many upgraded their forecasts for the full year.

The video and sound products division saw operating profits climb 46 per cent to £20.5m and has a strong order book for the second half.

Elsewhere, the film and television services division rode the increase in Hollywood film output to post operating profit of £3.3m, up from £2.3m.

The strong profit performance was in spite of flat results from the broadcasting division.

Investment Column, page 22

Second Hong Kong runway takes off

STEPHEN VINES
Hong Kong

Britain and China will today sign a landmark agreement to build a second runway for Hong Kong's new airport, enlarging what is already the world's biggest single civil engineering project under construction.

Nearly every big international airline preparing to use the new airport has warned that it would be a disaster if only one runway were operational. Nevertheless, the airport will open with just the one runway in late 1997 or early 1998 because Sino-British political wrangling over airport financing has hitherto made it impossible to reach agreement on building the airport to specifications originally envisaged.

There has been fierce international competition for a share of the airport building work, which is worth a total of some HK\$600m (£5.1bn) cost of the runway and associated work will be over HK\$4.6bn (£39.3m).

Civil engineering and construction companies from all over the world have homed in on the project because it is seen to be open to genuine international competition. Most of the main components of the airport and associated road and rail connections are being built by consortia. The contract to build the first runway, for example, is a joint venture between Britain's Alfred McAlpine and a New Zealand and Hong Kong company.

Other big British names, including Trafalgar House, have also won airport contracts but the biggest winners have been Japanese companies.

It is expected that a key part of today's deal will involve an undertaking that Hong Kong's incoming Chinese administration will bear no responsibility for financing the cost of the second runway.

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From today, try following what your child's doing.

NSPCC children's day 1 May
Launching the *A Day for Children* appeal.



Passengers delayed: Sino-British wrangling nearly grounded plans for new airport

business

Carlton offers Green pastures

Carlton's Michael Green has delivered 27 consecutive dividend increases and steadily improving profits, based on a balanced mix of businesses in fast-growing sectors. He oversees the leading commercial TV company, owner of the London weekday and Central franchises, and the biggest contributor to ITV's peak viewing schedule with its slate of populist programming. And he has carefully expanded into cable TV without betting the bank account.

So why does poor old Carlton trade at a discount to the shares of the media darlings? One argument, of course, is that he angered investors in the late 1980s by selling shares – bailing out when others were willing to stay the course. Others don't like his aloof, often scornful style, and his highly secretive ways, and wonder why he hasn't made a big acquisition in anticipation of the relaxation of media ownership rules in the Broadcasting Bill.

Even yesterday's stellar interim profits – well ahead of forecasts – managed to put only 5p on the share price by the end of the day.

Pre-tax profits ahead 19 per cent at £143.3m were all the more impressive given that broadcasting, representing by far the biggest slice of operating profits, was flat year on year.

Solid growth came from the Technicolor operations, often criticised by analysts because they see it as a business stuck in a mature market. In the event, Hollywood's output of films has been on the increase, with more prints of big movies being made to feed wide release patterns in the US and, increasingly, elsewhere. Even the videocassette market – which is meant one day to disappear with the advent of video-on-demand – is showing very robust growth. Profits rose 46 per cent in the video and sound products division, featuring Carlton's Quantel "tapeless" editing technology.

Further good news is provided by the advertising market, which is sure to improve this year. Procter & Gamble, which abandoned Carlton, will be back again in the summer, while revenues will be boosted by big sporting events and relatively robust economic growth.

With most of the trends pointing in the right direction, Carlton's promise to grow organically looks sensible, unless it can find an ITV company (perhaps HTV) at the right price.

Looking out, the shares at 481p are trading on an undemanding 16 times current year earnings of 30p, on the basis of £300m pre-tax profits, and 14.5 times on next year's £340m. While there are question marks about the loss of

THE INVESTMENT COLUMN

EDITED BY TOM STEVENSON

the levy from Channel 4 paid to ITV companies and growing competition from pay-TV, Carlton is set to do as well as any commercial TV group, and looks attractive at this price.

Dairy Crest worth a look

It's second time lucky for Dairy Crest, the marketing arm of the old Milk Marketing Board, which really is coming to the market. The first attempt to sell the company, Britain's second- or third-largest dairy products group, had to be pulled in 1994 as a result of the turmoil in the milk market caused by the Government's deregulation proposals.

Dairy Crest's history as an adjunct of a quango should not put off potential investors. Since 1990, new management led by chief executive John Houlston has dragged the group into the commercial world. Employee numbers have been slashed from 12,500 to 3,400, working in 11 plants against 32 six years ago. Gearing of 132 per cent

has turned into net cash of £3.5m. Results since 1990 have been distorted by the exceptional cost of this radical reshaping of the business, which has seen the dumping of most of the doorstep delivery business and a halving of the amount of liquid milk handled.

Combined with the margin squeeze caused by higher milk costs in the aftermath of deregulation, profits of £2.8m in 1994 represented a tenth of their level the year before. But there are signs Dairy Crest is emerging from the woods. Yesterday the group reported pre-tax profits up from £22.1m to £37.4m and said goodbye to exceptional charges that amounted to £11.2m in 1994-95.

Consumer foods like dairy spreads, where the group has the leading brand in Clover, and upmarket cheese, where it is also the leader after last year's Mendip acquisition, is one of the businesses Dairy Crest believes holds the key to future growth. The market in the former is growing at up to 12 per cent a year, while mature cheddar sales grew 18 per cent last year. But even here, margins remain low at 5.3 per cent. But its exposure to a commodity busi-

ness is highlighted by the group's warning that profits are likely to ease this year as a result of the recent fall in skimmed milk and butter fat prices.

A forward multiple of around 10, somewhat below Northern Foods and Unigate, would seem reasonable in view of the risks. Assuming profits rise to around £39m this year, the shares are worth buying up to a market capitalisation value of £250m or so.

Better days for Betterware

Betterware was one of those go-go shares that looked worryingly insubstantial when things started to go wrong a couple of years ago. Dependent on armies of part-time door-to-door salesmen, when recruitment stumbled, sales fell and profits came tumbling after.

Six months ago Betterware began to show signs of having turned the corner and yesterday's final figures for the year to March confirmed the rehabilitation of a company whose share price rose tenfold in the two years between 1991 and 1993 but lost 80 per cent of that peak value in the following 18 months.

Profits were distorted by a £3.5m exceptional charge in the year to March 1995 and a £1.1m credit this time, so the rise from £3.3m to £10.2m was flattening. At the underlying level, however, stripping out one-offs and ignoring the losses from discontinued businesses, the core direct selling operation saw a healthy rise in profits from £5.6m to £9.6m.

That, and especially Betterware's impressive cash flow meant a one-off 2.6p special dividend was added to an unchanged 2.6p payout to use up some of the company's £10m cash pile.

The good news is that the momentum of the past year has continued in the first quarter of the current year. A redesign of the catalogue, new products and better trained staff are all paying off and the few brokers who follow Betterware were yesterday nudging up their forecasts to about £10.5m for the current year.

On that basis earnings per share of around 6.7p would put the shares on a prospective price-earnings ratio of 15 at yesterday's 98.5p, up 6.5p. That compares favourably with the forecast growth rate, but after the gyrations of recent years, and the risks inherent in planned moves overseas, so it should. High enough.

Yorkshire council fishes around for coat of arms

CITY DIARY

NIGEL COPE

Problems of a politically incorrect nature at the newly formed East Riding of Yorkshire council which is replacing the old North Humberside council in Bridlington. The new body had been hoping to celebrate its links with the local fishing industry with a new coat of arms featuring a mermaid. Nothing wrong with that, you might think, only the mermaid in question featured "large prominent breasts".

Though popular with local fishermen, the mermaid's emblem proved too much for Doreen Clarke, a Labour councillor who described it as "inappropriate". "You wouldn't use a naked man in the same circumstances," she said.

The council has replaced the mermaid with a seahorse.

Nigel Whittaker, the former Kingfisher director who was ousted in a boardroom shake-up last year, now claims to be so busy that he has given up his beloved marathon running.

Mr Whittaker regularly used to pound the streets in his quest for fitness but now says he can live without it.

The running was useful at Kingfisher to rid myself of the stresses and strains of the job. But I don't feel the need for it any more.

Not because he no longer has a job, you understand, but because he has several.

Anyone ringing his London home is greeted by an answering machine informing you that this is "Nigel Whittaker corporate affairs".

Terry Maher, the ex-Pentos chairman, has completed the first chapter of his first novel after four months' hard labour. At this rate the tome should be published some time in the next century. But in spite of the slow progress he is pleased with the results.

We also know a little more of the plot – a kind of City thriller based on a dastardly takeover bid and unscrupulous behaviour by all concerned. He would not confirm that the hero is a small, bespectacled man with a love of books but don't bet against it. "I don't want to give too much away," he says.



Attire-challenged: Mermaid dress sense declared non-PC

consultancy". So far his clients include "a privatised train company, an energy company and one of the big six audit firms".

Then there is government department work on issues such as mental health. And the odd directorship which includes Cardcash, the anti credit-card fraud group which floated on Aim recently. "I don't want to be working on something and grooming it for the market. I just want to do things I enjoy."

British Airways has completed the shake-up of its PR division with the appointment of a new communications director. He is Kevin Murray, who has been working in a similar capacity at AEA Technology, a de-merged part of the Atomic Energy Authority which is coming

to the stock market soon.

Mr Murray, who hails from Zimbabwe, will take over from Peter Jones, who will remain on board in his previous position as head of public relations.

Mr Murray, 41, moved to the UK in 1985 when he joined Shearwater Communications in Oxfordshire. He later moved to Bayer, the chemicals group before joining the Atomic Energy Authority in 1992.

Arsenal has JVC, Newcastle United has Newcastle Brown Ale and Manchester United has Sharp. Now Blackburn Rovers has a sponsor to replace McEwan's, one of Scottish & Newcastle's beers. Step forward the Co-Operative Insurance Society, which is paying Blackburn an estimated £4m over four years for the honour of having its logo on the blue and white shirts of Alan Shearer and Co.

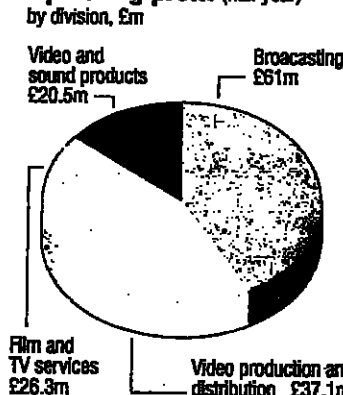
CIS said it was keen to back football due to its rising popularity and the decrease in incidents of hooliganism. This was before the England team re-arranged the club class lounge on their flight back from China, of course.

Carlton Communications: at a glance

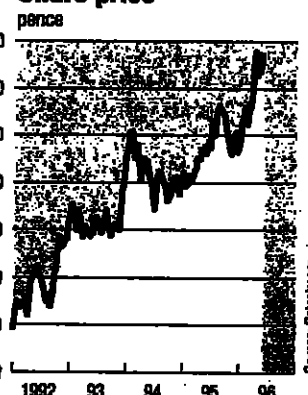
Market value: £2.78bn, share price 481p

Trading record	1993	1994	1995	1995 Half year	1996
Revenue (£m)	1,004.7	1,404.7	1,579.8	800.6	847.8
Pre-tax profits (£m)	126.2	190.2	246.7	120.1	143.3
Earnings per share (pence)	16.8	21.5	26.1	12.7	15.8
Dividends per share (pence)	7.48	8.26	9.44	3.72	4.37

Operating profit (half year) by division, £m



Share price



IN BRIEF

• Carlisle Group said Dev Pritchard, one of the original founders of Bakare, the private nursing home chain, is to become joint chief executive to develop a portfolio of investment properties in the health-care sector. Mr Pritchard has also agreed to subscribe for £3.9m in shares at 10.57p in the property investment group. He will also be entitled to subscribe for further shares at the same price to raise about £11.6m, with Carlisle entitled to force him to buy the shares after five years. Existing Carlisle shareholders will receive a one-for-four bonus issue of ordinary shares with warrants allowing them to subscribe for further shares at 10.57p. The company reported a 1995 pre-tax loss of £4.06m, against profits of £1.25m last time.

• The Prudential is "examining a number of opportunities" to acquire another life insurer, according to the chairman, Sir Martin Jacob. The aim is to grow the customer base, expand distribution capability, and increase market share. Sir Martin told shareholders at yesterday's annual meeting. The insurance group was also looking at the developments taking place in the building society movement, he said. Prudential said that its businesses both around the world and in the UK were performing well this year. Annual premium sales were up 4 per cent and single premium sales increased 12 per cent in the first quarter, a trend which has continued into the second quarter. Discussions with the Department of Trade and Industry about the group's "orphan assets" continue.

• Rolls-Royce, the luxury car-making division of Vickers, said it was seeking new customers in eastern Europe. It has set up dealerships in Prague and is also looking at other countries, including Poland. It already has dealerships in Russia and Hungary. The drive for orders in new markets had helped keep sales buoyant. In the first three months to March, Rolls-Royce sold a total of 396 cars, up 12 per cent from a year earlier.

• Tibbitt & Britten Group's trading for the year to date is in line with expectations, with an "encouraging" level of contract inquiries, the company told the annual meeting. In April, the group's North American business took over the operation of the Canada Safeway 500,000 square foot Vancouver Distribution Centre employing over 560 staff. Tendering activity remained high across the North American, international and UK businesses, the company said. It has appointed Edward Buchan as a non-executive director of the company from 1 July.

• City Technology Holdings will be valued at £75m-£80m when it floats on the main market next month. The company, founded and run by scientists from London's City University, will raise £45m through a simultaneous placing of shares. The price will be announced on 13 June and dealings will begin on 20 June. Operating profit rose from £4.8m to £5.8m in the year to June 1995 and stood at £2.9m in the six months to 31 December.

• Unichem, whose bid for rivals Lloyds Chemists has been kicked into touch by a monopolies investigation, said group turnover to the end of April showed increases in all three divisions. Sales were ahead in UK wholesaling, retail pharmacy and Portuguese wholesaling on a total and a like-for-like basis over last year, it told the annual meeting. It has completed submissions and presentations to the Monopolies and Mergers Commission panel investigating its bid for Lloyds and continues to expect a favourable outcome.

COMPANY RESULTS

	Turnover £	Pre-tax £	EPS	Dividend
Abacus Pacer (F)	48.8m (51.4m)	4.40m (3.00m)	7.3p (5.9p)	1.83p (1.5p)
Anglim Water (F)	778m (720m)	238m (210m)	78.1p (84.4p)	30p (25p)
Betterware (F)	61.4m (58.3m)	9.25m (1.01m)	5.5p (1.3p)	3.2p (2.5p)
Northcliffe (F)	33.1m (29.1m)	1.9m (0.44m)	1.9p (1p)	1.3p (1.3p)
Bristol Evening Post (F)	61.2m (50.0m)	0.9m (2.8m)	18.91p (18.85p)	14p (12.75p)
Carlton Communications (F)	948m (871m)	143m (123m)	15.3p (12.7p)	4.37p (3.72p)
Dunelm Mill (F)	373m (414m)	3.8m (1.7m)	1.2p (1.5p)	3p (2p)
Reville (F)	25.0m (17.1m)	2.00m (1.65m)	1.82p (1.53p)	0.5p (-)
Midland Research (F)	55.3m (54.8m)	3.72m (2.88m)	4.75p (3.71p)	2.85p (2.75p)
Southdown Electric (F)	1.80m (1.58m)	820m (802m)	106.2p (57.1p)	28.3p (-)
Tamworth (F)	9.51m (4.94m)	1.11m (0.32m)	0.22p (0.12p)	0.07p (0m)
Tandem Group (F)	18.13m (9.56m)	-2.15m (0.82m)	-4.15p (1.01p)	nil (-)

(F) - Final (I) - Interim

Belhaven float to fund pubs expansion

TOM STEVENSON
City Editor

Belhaven, Scotland's largest regional brewer, is planning to come to the market later this summer, ending 25 years of almost constant ownership changes.

A planned £35m float provides a partial exit for venture capitalists who backed a £23.5m management buyout in 1993 from the company's last ill-fated owner, Ascor Holdings, the former Control Securities.

Most of the £18m raised in the flotation will be used to repay debts and set the balance sheet up for a proposed expansion of the company's managed pub estate.

Belhaven started brewing on the site of its current brewery in Dunbar in 1719. It was a local operator until 1972 when it was acquired by CCI Investments, which later changed its name to City Centre Restaurants and now owns restaurant chains including Garfunkels.

During the 1980s Control Securities, led by Ugandan Asian businessman Nasimu Virani, acquired the brewery not once but twice. In between, Raymond Miquel, the former head of whisky group Bell's, tried his hand at running the company.

Belhaven remained profitable even through Control Securities difficulties – it was badly hit by the collapse of the Bank of Credit & Commerce International – and the ultimate jailing of Mr Virani for two and a half years for his part in the bank's failure.

In the year to March 1993, just before the buyout, profits of £2.6m were struck from sales of £24m. Latest reported figures showed a £4.2m profit from sales of £29.6m.

Belhaven is an integrated business with a brewery, drinks distribution operation and more than 60 pubs. It brews a portfolio of its own branded beers, which it sells together with third party beers, in particular from Bass, to its estate of eight managed and 56 tenanted pubs.

As well as its cask conditioned ales, Belhaven has identified the keg ale sector as an area of potential growth. It also has a range of premium bottled beers and does contract bottling and brewing for other brewers.

Scotland is predominantly a free-trade market and Belhaven has increased volumes in that market by 24 per cent in the past three years.

Six of its managed pubs have recently been restyled and upgraded using Scottish themes.

New issues generate millionaire boffins

NIGEL COPE

A computer software company with only 25 staff was valued on the stock market at £30m yesterday after its shares rose to a 60 per cent premium on their first day of dealings.

Shares in Recognition Systems, which develops software used in database marketing, closed at 110p against the placing price of 70p. The placing raises £3.3m of new money which will be used for expansion.

The deal makes rich men of the two founders, David Bounds and Paul Gregory, who formed the company in 1989 and control 44 per cent of the stock. Though neither is selling shares, their combined stake is worth around £14m on paper. Professor Bounds, a former

professor of computer science and applied mathematics at Aston University, is a world authority on neural computing.

Paul Gregory is a former head of product development at Vickers, the defence group.

The sparkling debut continues the trend of academics turning their companies into stock market successes. The directors of City Technology, a gas sensors company that issued its pathfinder prospectus yesterday, formed the company at City University in London.

The directors of Vanguard Medica working on a migraine treatment are all eminent scientists. All made paper fortunes this month when the company's shares soared to a big premium on their first day of dealings.

NEWSPAPERS SUPPORT RECYCLING

Recycled paper made up 34.5% of the raw material for UK newspapers in 1995.

Source - Pulp & Paper Information Centre.

market report/shares

DATA BANK

FT-SE 100
9775.7 +15.5

FT-SE 250
4514.8 +10.4

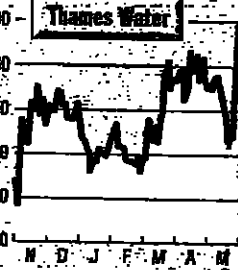
FT-SE 350
1911.7 +7.1

SEAQ VOLUME
714.3m shares,
34,290 bargains

Gifts Index
92.24 -0.02

SHARE SPOTLIGHT

share price, pence



Vendome cushioned by talk of a Richmond buy up

Is Richmond, the Swiss holding company controlled by the Rupert family of South Africa, planning to tighten its grip on Vendome Luxury Goods?

Shares of the Cartier and Dunhill group have displayed remarkable resilience, blissfully ignoring profit downgradings.

They climbed 16p to 645p (after 664p) as stories circulated Richmond intended to mop up the 30 per cent it does not already own.

Richmond split the Rothmans International tobacco business and the luxury goods operation into separate companies three years ago.

Two years later it astonished many by bidding £1.6bn for the 39 per cent of Rothmans it did not already own. Now the suspicion is Vendome will suffer the same fate.

The Richmond assault on Rothmans was not the best kept secret and the way Ven-

dome shares have been behaving could suggest inspired buying. The shares (or units as they have been designated) are riding at a peak, almost double the split price. A year ago they were 475p.

Taking out the 30 per cent minority would cost around £1.4bn, a sum well within the grasp of the immensely rich Rupert family.

On yet another day dominated by a flood of excitement in the water sector, Grand Metropolitan, the food and drinks group, again created interest, managing a 5p gain to 446p. Stories persist a dramatic reshaping is near. The group has admitted it has looked at the wisdom of splitting itself into two. The pressure for a revamp could be mounting.

Guinness and Seagram, the Canadian group, are rumoured to be looking at the International Distillers & Vintners side and Grandmet, like Thorn



MARKET REPORT

DEREK PAIN

Stock market reporter of the year

EMI, could be encouraged to reconsider the advantages of a harmonious break-up.

The FT-SE 100 index ended 15.5 points higher at 3,775.7 with utilities providing the main inspiration. The not altogether surprising arrival of Southern Electric on the doorstep of its fellow utility, Southern Water, created fresh waves of excitement.

Southern Water jumped 46p (a two day gain of 30p) to 987p but the bidder suffered further anxiety, off 19p at 707p.

Yorkshire Water, at least in share price terms, put its recent humiliation behind it, gaining almost 10 per cent to 758p. Wessex splashed 8.4 per cent

higher to 360p and Thames, the biggest of the privatised water companies, jumped 35p to 599p, the best performance by a blue chip. Severn Trent was not far behind, up 34p at 595p.

The market was agog with theories about the next water bid and just what Scottish Power, up 6p at 325p, plans to do. It clearly has the ammunition to oust SE but could decide that any of the other water companies would meet its needs, hence the upsurge.

SE strengthened its position by moving into the market, picking up almost 10 per cent of SW at 995p a share through Barclays de Zoete Wedd and Merrill Lynch.

Electricities drew some comfort from the frenzy with old takeover candidate Yorkshire Electricity gaining 6p, to 755p.

Other utilities joined the fun. The often attacked British Gas added 7p to 184.5p and BT, reflecting the Morgan Stanley support, added a further 8.5p to 348.5p.

Elsewhere House of Fraser, the stores group, rose 8p to 185p on hopes of an encouraging trading statement to-day. Allred's fell 12p to 194p as the row over its decision to sell its duty free operation to BAA for £130m continued to rage. Swissair has, it seems, offered £145m. The large institutions are voicing their disgust with PDFA, sitting on 21 per cent, said to be leading the revolt.

The day's newcomers fared well. Prism Rail, the first quoted railway services company since post-war nationalisation, made the sort of upbeat debut which would amaze many of

the passengers on its London, Tilbury & Southern line. The shares, placed at 100p, romped to 205p.

Vodafone, up 5p to 258p, was thought to have responded to bullish noises from ANS Anro Hoare Govett and Great Universal Stores added 10p to 669p as share buy back hopes resurfaced.

Stentor, a fledgling Irish telephone group which arrived at 72p a few weeks ago, continued to ring the right numbers, up 10p to 113p. Kalamazoo, a computer and stationery group, rose 28p to 143p on its £21.8m takeover of the European automotive dealer systems of Datapoint.

Carlisle, the property company in the Nigel Wray orbit, fell 1.5p to 21.5p as Dev Prichard, a founder of the Talcure nursing homes chain moved in with the intention of focusing on healthcare. He is investing up to £20.6m.

TAKING STOCK

□ Tarmaris, the nursing homes group, is on the verge of more acquisitions. The takeover of a 250-bed group is near and two more deals are likely to be completed in the next few months. The company, which increased the beds under its wing from 455 to 907 last year, hopes to control around 2,000 by the end of the year. Its expansion could attract bid attention and there is talk of possible predators lurking.

□ First Information, a multimedia group, held at 178p. Charterhouse Times, the stockbroker, sees reported profits of £1.1m this year, jumping to £3.1m next compared with a £6.5m loss last year.

Share Price Data

Prices are in sterling except where stated. The yield is last year's dividend, grossed up by 20 per cent, as a percentage of the share price. The price/earnings (P/E) ratio is the share price divided by last year's earnings per share, excluding exceptional items.

Other details: r Ex rights; Ex-dividend; Ex all; Unlisted Securities Market; a Suspended; pp Partly Paid; pm Nil Paid Shares.

Source: FT Information

The Independent Index

The index allows you to access real-time share prices by phone from Seaq. Simply dial 0891 123 333, followed by the 4-digit code printed next to each share. To access the latest financial reports dial 0891 1233 followed by one of the two-digit codes below:

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Stirling Rates 04
Bullion Report 05
Wall St Report 06
Tokyo Market 07

Predominant Issues 36
Water Shares 37
Electricity Shares 40
High Street Banks 41

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For assistance, call our helpline 071 873 4375 (9.30am-5.30pm).

Calls cost 30p per minute (cheaper rates), and 40p at all other times. Call charges include VAT.

Market leaders: Top 20 volumes

Stock Volume Stock Volume Stock Volume Stock Volume

Southen Water 320000 Ladbroke 500000 RBS 500000

BT 170000 BT 700000 RBS 500000

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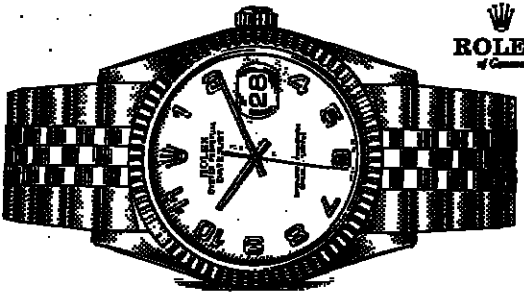
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Household Goods

Insurance

Chemicals

Building Materials

Building Construction

Breweries, Pubs & Rest

Banking

Alcoholic Beverages

Merchandise

Other

Government Securities

Index-linked

Shorts

Mediums

Longs

Undated

Index-linked

Shorts

Mediums

Longs

Undated

Index-linked

Good reasons for putting the Mob under a microscope

To most people the subject of economics is a body of knowledge, like history, and what's more a body of knowledge that is mostly wrong. On the other hand, economists see their discipline as a method of analysis, a particular way of trying to interpret the world, more like philosophy.

The usefulness – or otherwise – of economics as a tool is well illustrated by its application to problems which the ordinary person would not think of as a matter for economists at all. Take organised crime. A recent book* applies economic analysis to this thorny subject and comes up with some surprising conclusions.

The motivation for the research – many of whose authors are, not surprisingly, Italian – is the observation that the activities of organisations such as the Sicilian Mafia are driven by the desire to make money.

There is no reason they should not be analysed like any other business activity. As in any other business, criminal activity can take several forms. Broadly speaking, criminal "firms" operate in either very competitive markets, such as loan sharking and prostitution, or in oligopolistic ones, such as money laundering and narcotics smuggling, where a few organisations dominate. The table lists the factors tending to favour the second type of organisation.

The broader the range of activities treated as illegal by the government, the greater will be the incentives for these larger-scale organisations to form. Heavy fiscal burdens on legal markets will also create incentives for an illegal market.

Typically, the big businesses of the underworld tend to be co-ordinated from a central location with "verti-



ECONOMIC VIEW
DIANE COYLE

cal" links between groups which can provide the variety of skills needed – from violence to accountancy.

Crime is not quite like any other business. Contracts are not enforceable in any conventional way, although violence offers an alternative, while property rights are ill-defined.

Even so, the economic method offers some useful insights into crime. For example, it helps to understand why so much of the male US population is in prison if crime is seen as paying more than other inner-city job opportunities.

One of the papers in the book considers the design of effective deterrence policies – or "regulation" of the organised crime industry, as it puts it. There are some pretty obvious difficulties in trying to deter something like the Mafia. There is a risk that inappropriate action simply makes them fight back, increasing the criminals' investment in violence and corruption.

However, suppose the govern-

ment has the objective of minimising the profit of the Mafia. The economists analyse the problem using "game theory", the mathematical technique which models behaviour as if it were like a game where the players adopt strategies to try for the best outcome.

They conclude that the crime business will be least profitable when there is a kind of collusion between government and criminals. The government's best strategy is to allow criminal firms to get away with low profits but to use the full force of the law to put them out of business if they start up activities which are too profitable. In this case, the firms have a choice between steady, low-profit business or a high risk of no business. Those that are prepared not to earn "too much" are rewarded with survival.

The analysis is complicated if the criminal firm is assumed to be able to save up its past profits, because building up capital reduces the prob-

ability that law enforcement will put it out of business. However, that would also increase the government's pay-off for destroying a firm that had enjoyed big profits in the past.

The authors conclude: "The state, in designing its deterrence policy, should take advantage of the nature of the organised crime sector." It will do better to take advantage of the economic incentives rather than simply throwing money at law enforcement regardless.

This is all very well, but the economists' approach raises several objections. Some are obvious: how much is "too much"? How should the analysis take account of the fact that big criminal firms operate in many markets?

A second objection is that the assumption that closing the "firm" is the only effective form of regulation is extreme. For instance, the anti-corruption movement in Italy seems to have decreased the number of criminal events while increasing the risk of each crime; but this has apparently raised the profitability on each single criminal event by raising the going rate for bribes demanded by officials and politicians who are prepared to take the risk of engaging in criminal activities.

More seriously, it is right to assume that the government's aim is to make sure crime does not pay too much? Or do governments actually want to minimise the amount of criminal activity rather than its profitability? In the case of, say, uranium or Semtex smuggling they probably want to do the latter. In addition, as Carlo Scarpa, commenting on the analysis, points out, although the idea of an implicit deal with the Mafia has found acceptance with some politicians, "this has led to a substantial loss



Family fortunes: Mafiosi are driven by profit motives and their 'business' can be analysed like any other

of credibility of the state in several fields". There is what an economist would describe as a "reputational externality" for the government in the recommended form of regulation.

He continues: "The layman would probably be puzzled by the idea of regulating something that in theory should not exist, that is criminal activity. Economists (cynical as we are) are instead quite used to this idea." However, governments have considered both implicit and explicit bargains with criminals. Several years ago Italy's finance minister (an economist) proposed guaranteeing public sector jobs to cigarette smugglers who agreed to give up their business and surrender their boats. The idea was squashed by opponents who

thought it would actually create an incentive for people to become cigarette smugglers in the first place.

A second example of a near miss for economics in influencing public policy is the periodic debate about whether cannabis should be legalised. The economists' line is that banning cannabis altogether raises its price and makes dealing an excessively profitable business. Deciding if illegal creates a high barrier to entry into the cannabis supply business, even though physical barriers are low – after all, many otherwise law-abiding citizens seem able to grow it on their windowsills.

Legalisation would destroy the excess profits and undermine the criminal cannabis-manufacturing and

dealing industry. The government could even raise some revenue by taxing the drug like tobacco or alcohol. That would give the tax inspector rather than the nation's window boxes and back gardens. The useful economic analysis runs, of course, into profoundly non-economic objections. Yet even if public opinion is in the end moved by other considerations, economics remains a helpful tool for thinking about the appropriate policies for tackling crime.

*The Economics of Organised Crime, edited by Gianluca Fiorentini and Sam Peltzman, Cambridge University Press and CEPR, £19.95

Conditions favouring mafia-controlled cartels

- Product differentiation Low
- Barriers to entry Low
- Technology Low
- Labour Unskilled
- Demand Inelastic
- Number of firms Large
- Size of firms Small
- Unionisation Present

Foreign Exchange Rates

Country	Spot	1 month	3 months	Spot	1 month	3 months
US	1.933	0.7	24.21	1000	—	—
Canada	2.0691	11.3	50.47	13725	2.1	2.0
Germany	2.2477	53.46	150.49	15453	25.84	84.81
France	75.416	52.100	436.405	52322	73.88	217.207
Italy	23637	75.80	242.88	16274	45.44	170.89
Japan	129.51	75.70	225.28	10874	45.44	135.33
ECU	129.0	15.1	45.40	12943	7.8	23.25
Belgium	48.263	12.9	34.29	13177	6.5	15.35
Denmark	100.0	175.133	259.438	53700	85.65	270.220
Netherlands	2.6772	65.89	187.34	17295	35.02	117.32
Ireland	0.9701	13.8	26.18	15814	4.7	12.17
Norway	10.035	16.64	329.233	6.8091	42.17	110.40
Spain	166.28	26.36	72.88	12821	23.27	64.72
Sweden	133.42	9.35	25.34	63072	85.28	260.340
Switzerland	1.5325	68.48	236.94	12729	34.13	115.07
Australia	1.0998	20.31	67.85	12505	19.54	54.58
Hong Kong	117.57	0.11	234.70	77395	2.12	15.35
Malaysia	3.8001	0.0	0.0	2.5073	4.14	80.80
New Zealand	2.2261	43.57	133.56	14579	30.32	89.40
Saudi Arabia	5.9979	0.0	0.0	3.7505	2.7	5.14
Singapore	2.1403	0.0	0.0	1.416	41.30	103.88

Other Spot Rates

Country	Sterling	Dollar
Argentina	15989	0.0995
Australia	1.5325	0.6722
Canada	1.5325	0.6722
China	12.6533	0.0832
Egypt	5.2227	0.0407
Finland	7.2227	0.1393
Ghana	248.045	0.0020
India	33.3333	0.0300
Kuwait	0.4564	0.0303

Forward rates quoted high to low are at a discount; rates quoted low to high are at a premium. Dollar rates quoted as reciprocals. For the latest foreign exchange rates call 0891 33 3033. Calls cost 35p per minute (cheap rate) 45p other times.

Interest Rates

UK	Base	600%	250%	Prime	375%	50%
Discount	450%	Discount	525%	Discount	250%	—
Intervention	370%	Prime	700%	Prime	500%	—
Italy	Discount	500%	Discount	500%	Discount	150%
Netherlands	Discount	322%	Discount	322%	Discount	150%

Bond Yields

Country	Yr	Yield %	10yr	Yield %	Country	Yr	Yield %	10yr	Yield %
UK	6%	7.39	6%	8.02	Netherlands	5%	5.7	5%	6.30
US	6%	6.43	6%	6.95	Spain	10%	10.0	10%	9.08
Japan	6%	1.89	1%	3.18	Italy	10%	10.0	10%	9.47
Australia	6%	8.14	6%	8.91	Belgium	10%	10.0	10%	9.47
France	6%	5.26	6%	6.42	Sweden	10%	10.0	10%	9.47
Germany	5%	5.46	5%	7.25	ECU	10%	10.0	10%	9.47

Money Market Rates

Overnight	7 Day	1 Month	3 Months	6 Months	1 Year
Interbank	5.5	5.5	5.5	5.5	5.5
Local Authority Depos	5.5	5.5	5.5	5.5	5.5
Discount Market Depos	5.5	5.5	5.5	5.5	5.5
Treasury Bills (Buy)	5.5	5.5	5.5	5.5	5.5
ECU	5.5	5.5	5.5	5.5	5.5
UK Lending	5.5	5.5	5.5	5.5	5.5

Tourist Rates

2 Buys	1 Buys	2 Buys	1 Buys
Australia (Dollars)	18990	Germany (Francs)	76800
Austria (Schillings)	158000	France (Francs)	22700
Belgium (Francs)	469000	Italy (Lira)	341000
Canada (Dollars)	21000	Hong Kong (Dollars)	14500
Cyprus (Pounds)	10000	Japan (Yen)	10000
Denmark (Krone)	8500	Malaysia (Ringgits)	230000
Holland (Guilder)	21425	Norway (Krone)	100000
Finland (Markka)	2400	Spain (Pesetas)	16000

Life Financial Futures

Contract	Settlement price	High/Low for day	Settlement price	High/Low for day
Long GB	100.08	100.08	100.08	100.08
Long Euro	100.08	100.08	100.08	100.08
Long Japan	100.08	100.08	100.08	100.08
Long US	100.08	100.08	100.08	100.08
Long Swiss	100.08	100.08	100.08	100.08
Long NZ	100.08	100.08	100.08	100.08
Long HK	100.08	100.08	100.08	100.08
Long SG	100.08	100.08	100.08	100.08
Long AU	100.08	100.08	100.08	100.08
Long NZ	100.08	100.08	100.08	100.08

Life FT-SE Index

Settlement price	777.5	Settlement price	777.5
June	777.5	July	777.5
July	777.5	Aug	777.5
Aug	777.5	Sep	777.5
Sep	777.5	Oct	777.5
Oct	777.5	Nov	777.5
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Mar	777.5	Apr	777.5
Apr	777.5	May	777.5
May	777.5	Jun	777.5
Jun	777.5	Jul	777.5
Jul	777.5	Aug	777.5
Aug	777.5	Sep	777.5
Sep	777.5	Oct	777.5
Oct	777.5	Nov	777.5
Nov	777.5	Dec	777.5
Dec	777.5	Jan	777.5
Jan	777.5	Feb	777.5
Feb	777.5	Mar	777.5
Mar	777.5	Apr	777.5
Apr	777.5	May	777.5
May	777.5	Jun	777.5
Jun	777.5	Jul	777.5
Jul	777.5	Aug	777.5
Aug	777.5	Sep	777.5

Racing

RICHARD EDMONDSON

The bushes were trembling violently on the Newmarket gallops yesterday and that was even after the wind dropped. Watchers scrambled away from their cars following a highly impressive trial by a horse that will run in the Derby in nine days' time.

Double Leaf was the name of the colt that mobilised the bargain hunters, and by the end of the day his Epsom price had contracted to 20-1 - from 33-1 - with Ladbrokes.

Michael Stoute's horse won on his debut as a two-year-old at the racecourse but was at the top of the race when he was fifth, beaten less than three lengths, behind the Blue Riband favourite, Glory Of Dancer, in the Dante Stakes.

The son of Sadler's Wells will be partnered by Ray Cochrane, who has yet to ride him on the racecourse but was in the saddle yesterday on a Newmarket morning which opened with this year's racing drizzle.

Double Leaf was sent off at 33-1, but his lead horse, Mellaby, and Desert Shot, whose rider, Greville Starkey, has a mixed scrapbook when it comes to the Blue Riband. When asked to display his qualities Double Leaf swept past Mellaby.

by, and when the useful Desert Shot challenged, Double Leaf went 12 lengths clear.

Despite this virtuoso offering, word from Freemason Lodge

RICHARD EDMONDSON
NAP: Mill O'The Rags
(Nereford 9.00)
NB: Dajraan
(Uttoxeter 3.00)

still has it that Dr Massini, the Glasgow Stakes victor on the Knavesmire, remains Stoute's principal Derby hope. Another

son of Sadler's Wells, he was seen stretching his joints yesterday in a three-quarter speed gallop, following his recovery from lameness.

A further recent inmate from the sick bay, Mark Of Esteem, emerged from his box yesterday and will resume fast work this weekend. The damp weather in Aibion had to get to the Dubai-trained horse eventually and Godolphin's 2,000 Guineas winner succumbed on Tuesday when he was running a high temperature. A quick shake of the thermometer later, though,

Mark Of Esteem seemed to be back in business. "He had a normal temperature this morning and is fine in himself," Simon Crisford, Godolphin's racing manager, said.

"We opted to give him another easy day today, so we gave him a lead out. He appeared to be very bright and we hope to have him back in tack tomorrow. You have to take it day by day, but all being well, he will have some fast work at the weekend and we still hope to make it for the big race."

Godolphin also have the un-

beaten Mick's Love stored away for Epsom, and a further bulletin from the gallops yesterday suggested their Predominate Stakes winner, Don Michelletto, will be supplemented for Sunday's Prix du Jockey Club (French Derby) at Chantilly.

"We are pleased both with the way he worked this morning and has come out of the race at Goodwood," Crisford said.

Peter Chapple-Hyam trains the sole British acceptors among the 15 entries for the French Classic - Astor Place and Polarix Flight, who is also in the Prix John Prat.

The Manton trainer may also supplement, however, and has High Baroque waiting for the call. The carrot - the prospect of uncovering a Classic winner: the downside - a late entry fee of £50,000 francs (£33,000).

Don Michelletto (2.20) sent 270 miles from D. Loder's Newmarket stable in Suffolk; Ockler (2.30) sent 272 miles from M. Tompkins' Newmarket stable in Suffolk; Green Green (4.20) sent 273 miles from S. Williams' Newmarket stable in Suffolk.

BRIGHTON

HYPERION
2.10 Dalmay Dancer 3.40 Watch Me Go
2.40 Farmest 4.10 Bright Eclipse
3.10 Bubble Wings (nb) 4.10 No Sympathy (nap)

GOING: Good (good to firm in places).
STALLS: 10-11-12-13-14-15-16-17-18-19-20-21-22-23-24-25-26-27-28-29-30-31-32-33-34-35-36-37-38-39-40-41-42-43-44-45-46-47-48-49-50-51-52-53-54-55-56-57-58-59-60-61-62-63-64-65-66-67-68-69-70-71-72-73-74-75-76-77-78-79-80-81-82-83-84-85-86-87-88-89-90-91-92-93-94-95-96-97-98-99-100-101-102-103-104-105-106-107-108-109-110-111-112-113-114-115-116-117-118-119-120-121-122-123-124-125-126-127-128-129-130-131-132-133-134-135-136-137-138-139-140-141-142-143-144-145-146-147-148-149-150-151-152-153-154-155-156-157-158-159-160-161-162-163-164-165-166-167-168-169-170-171-172-173-174-175-176-177-178-179-180-181-182-183-184-185-186-187-188-189-190-191-192-193-194-195-196-197-198-199-200-201-202-203-204-205-206-207-208-209-210-211-212-213-214-215-216-217-218-219-220-221-222-223-224-225-226-227-228-229-230-231-232-233-234-235-236-237-238-239-240-241-242-243-244-245-246-247-248-249-250-251-252-253-254-255-256-257-258-259-260-261-262-263-264-265-266-267-268-269-270-271-272-273-274-275-276-277-278-279-280-281-282-283-284-285-286-287-288-289-290-291-292-293-294-295-296-297-298-299-300-301-302-303-304-305-306-307-308-309-310-311-312-313-314-315-316-317-318-319-320-321-322-323-324-325-326-327-328-329-330-331-332-333-334-335-336-337-338-339-340-341-342-343-344-345-346-347-348-349-350-351-352-353-354-355-356-357-358-359-360-361-362-363-364-365-366-367-368-369-370-371-372-373-374-375-376-377-378-379-380-381-382-383-384-385-386-387-388-389-390-391-392-393-394-395-396-397-398-399-400-401-402-403-404-405-406-407-408-409-410-411-412-413-414-415-416-417-418-419-420-421-422-423-424-425-426-427-428-429-430-431-432-433-434-435-436-437-438-439-440-441-442-443-444-445-446-447-448-449-450-451-452-453-454-455-456-457-458-459-460-461-462-463-464-465-466-467-468-469-470-471-472-473-474-475-476-477-478-479-480-481-482-483-484-485-486-487-488-489-490-491-492-493-494-495-496-497-498-499-500-501-502-503-504-505-506-507-508-509-510-511-512-513-514-515-516-517-518-519-520-521-522-523-524-525-526-527-528-529-530-531-532-533-534-535-536-537-538-539-540-541-542-543-544-545-546-547-548-549-550-551-552-553-554-555-556-557-558-559-560-561-562-563-564-565-566-567-568-569-570-571-572-573-574-575-576-577-578-579-580-581-582-583-584-585-586-587-588-589-590-591-592-593-594-595-596-597-598-599-600-601-602-603-604-605-606-607-608-609-610-611-612-613-614-615-616-617-618-619-620-621-622-623-624-625-626-627-628-629-630-631-632-633-634-635-636-637-638-639-640-641-642-643-644-645-646-647-648-649-650-651-652-653-654-655-656-657-658-659-660-661-662-663-664-665-666-667-668-669-670-671-672-673-674-675-676-677-678-679-680-681-682-683-684-685-686-687-688-689-690-691-692-693-694-695-696-697-698-699-700-701-702-703-704-705-706-707-708-709-710-711-712-713-714-715-716-717-718-719-720-721-722-723-724-725-726-727-728-729-730-731-732-733-734-735-736-737-738-739-740-741-742-743-744-745-746-747-748-749-750-751-752-753-754-755-756-757-758-759-760-761-762-763-764-765-766-767-768-769-770-771-772-773-774-775-776-777-778-779-780-781-782-783-784-785-786-787-788-789-790-791-792-793-794-795-796-797-798-799-800-801-802-803-804-805-806-807-808-809-810-811-812-813-814-815-816-817-818-819-820-821-822-823-824-825-826-827-828-829-830-831-832-833-834-835-836-837-838-839-840-841-842-843-844-845-846-847-848-849-850-851-852-853-854-855-856-857-858-859-860-861-862-863-864-865-866-867-868-869-870-871-872-873-874-875-876-877-878-879-880-881-882-883-884-885-886-887-888-889-890-891-892-893-894-895-896-897-898-899-900-901-902-903-904-905-906-907-908-909-910-911-912-913-914-915-916-917-918-919-920-921-922-923-924-925-926-927-928-929-930-931-932-933-934-935-936-937-938-939-940-941-942-943-944-945-946-947-948-949-950-951-952-953-954-955-956-957-958-959-960-961-962-963-964-965-966-967-968-969-970-971-972-973-974-975-976-977-978-979-980-981-982-983-984-985-986-987-988-989-990-991-992-993-994-995-996-997-998-999-1000-1001-1002-1003-1004-1005-1006-1007-1008-1009-1010-1011-1012-1013-1014-1015-1016-1017-1018-1019-1020-1021-1022-1023-1024-1025-1026-1027-1028-1029-1030-1031-1032-1033-1034-1035-1036-1037-1038-1039-1040-1041-1042-1043-1044-1045-1046-1047-1048-1049-1050-1051-1052-1053-1054-1055-1056-1057-1058-1059-1060-1061-1062-1063-1064-1065-1066-1067-1068-1069-1070-1071-1072-1073-1074-1075-1076-1077-1078-1079-1080-1081-1082-1083-1084-1085-1086-1087-1088-1089-1090-1091-1092-1093-1094-1095-1096-1097-1098-1099-1100-1101-1102-1103-1104-1105-1106-1107-1108-1109-1110-1111-1112-1113-1114-1115-1116-1117-1118-1119-1120-1121-1122-1123-1124-1125-1126-1127-1128-1129-1130-1131-1132-1133-1134-1135-1136-1137-1138-1139-1140-1141-1142-1143-1144-1145-1146-1147-1148-1149-1150-1151-1152-1153-1154-1155-1156-1157-1158-1159-1160-1161-1162-1163-1164-1165-1166-1167-1168-1169-1170-1171-1172-1173-1174-1175-1176-1177-1178-1179-1180-1181-1182-1183-1184-1185-1186-1187-1188-1189-1190-1191-1192-1193-1194-1195-1196-1197-1198-1199-1200-1201-1202-1203-1204-1205-1206-1207-1208-1209-1210-1211-1212-1213-1214-1215-1216-1217-1218-1219-1220-1221-1222-1223-1224-1225-1226-1227-1228-1229-1230-1231-1232-1233-1234-1235-1236-1237-1238-1239-1240-1241-1242-1243-1244-1245-1246-1247-1248-1249-1250-1251-1252-1253-1254-1255-1256-1257-1258-1259-1260-1261-1262-1263-1264-1265-1266-1267-1268-1269-1270-1271-1272-1273-1274-1275-1276-1277-1278-1279-1280-1281-1282-1283-1284-1285-1286-1287-1288-1289-1290-1291-1292-1293-1294-1295-1296-1297-1298-1299-1300-1301-1302-1303-1304-1305-1306-1307-1308-1309-1310-1311-1312-1313-1314-1315-1316-1317-1318-1319-1320-1321-1322-1323-1324-1325-1326-1327-1328-1329-1330-1331-1332-1333-1334-1335-1336-1337-1338-1339-1340-1341-1342-1343-1344-1345-1346-1347-1348-1349-1350-1351-1352-1353-1354-1355-1356-1357-1358-1359-1360-1361-1362-1363-1364-1365-1366-1367-1368-1369-1370-1371-1372-1373-1374-1375-1376-1377-1378-1379-1380-1381-1382-1383-1384-1385-1386-1387-1388-1389-1390-1391-1392-1393-1394-1395-1396-1397-1398-1399-1400-1401-1402-1403-1404-1405-1406-1407-1408-1409-1410-1411-1412-1413-1414-1415-1416-1417-1418-1419-1420-1421-1422-1423-1424-1425-1426-1427-1428-1429-1430-1431-1432-1433-1434-1435-1436-1437-1438-1439-1440-1441-1442-1443-1444-1445-1446-1447-1448-1449-1450-1451-1452-1453-1454-1455-1456-1457-1458-1459-1460-1461-1462-1463-1464-1465-1466-1467-1468-1469-1470-1471-1472-1473-1474-1475-1476-1477-1478-1479-1480-1481-1482-1483-1484-1485-1486-1487-1488-1489-1490-1491-1492-1493-1494-1495-1496-1497-1498-1499-1500-1501-1502-1503-1504-1505-1506-1507-1508-1509-1510-1511-1512-1513-1514-1515-1516-1517-1518-1519-1520-1521-1522-1523-1524-1525-1526-1527-1528-1529-1530-1531-1532-1533-1534-1535-1536-1537-1538-1539-1540-1541-1542-1543-1544-1545-1546-1547-1548-1549-1550-1551-1552-1553-1554-1555-1556-1557-1558-1559-1560-1561-1562-1563-1564-1565-1566-1567-1568-1569-1570-1571-1572-1573-1574-1575-1576-1577-1578-1579-1580-1581-1582-1583-1584-1585-1586-1587-1588-1589-1590-1591-1592-1593-1594-1595-1596-1597-1598-1599-1600-1601-1602-1603-1604-1605-1606-1607-1608-1609-1610-1611-1612-1613-1614-1615-1616-1617-1618-1619-1620-1621-1622-1623-1624-1625-1626-1627-1628-1629-1630-1631-1632-1633-1634-1635-1636-1637-1638-1639-1640-1641-1642-1643-1644-1645-1646-1647-1648-1649-1650-1651-1652-1653-1654-1655-1656-1657-1658-1659-1660-1661-1662-1663-1664-1665-1666-1667-1668-1669-1670-1671-1672-1673-1674-1675-1676-1677-1678-1679-1680-1681-1682-1683-1684-1685-1686-1687-1688-1689-1690-1691-1692-1693-1694-1695-1696-1697-1698-1699-1700-1701-1702-1703-1704-1705-1706-1707-1708-1709-1710-1711-1712-1713-1714-1715-1716-1717-1718-1719-1720-1721-1722-1723-1724-1725-1726-1727-1728-1729-1730-1731-1732-1733-1734-1735-1736-1737-1738-1739-1740-1741-1742-1743-1744-1745-1746-1747-1748-1749-1750-1751-1752-1753-1754-1755-1756-1757-1758-1759-1760-1761-1762-1763-1764-1765-1766-1767-1768-1769-1770-1771-1772-1773-1774-1775-1776-1777-1778-1779-1780-1781-1782-1783-1784-1785-1786-1787-1788-1789-1790-1791-1792-1793-1794-1795-1796-1797-1798-1799-1800-1801-1802-1803-1804-1805-1806-1807-1808-1809-1810-1811-1812-1813-1814-1815-1816-1817-1818-1819-1820-1821-1822-1823-1824-1825-1826-1827-1828-1829-1830-1831-1832-1833-1834-1835-1836-1837-1838-1839-1840-1841-1842-1843-1844-1845-1846-1847-1848-1849-1850-1851-1852-1853-1854-1855-1856-1857-1858-1859-1860-1861-1862-1863-1864-1865-1866-1867-1868-1869-1870-1871-1872-1873-1874-1875-1876-1877-1878-1879-1880-1881-1882-1883-1884-1885-1886-1887-1888-1889-1890-1891-1892-1893-1894-1895-1896-1897-1898-1899-1900-1901-1902-1903-1904-1905-1906-1907-1908-1909-1910-1911-1912-1913-1914-1915-1916-1917-1918-1919-1920-1921-1922-1923-1924-1925-1926-1927-1928-1929-1930-1931-1932-1933-1934-1935-1936-1937-1938-1939-1940-1941-1942-1943-1944-1945-1946-1947-1948-1949-1950-1951-1952-1953-1954-1955-1956-1957-1958-1959-1960-1961-1962-1963-1964-1965-1966-1967-1968-1969-1970-1971-1972-1973-1974-1975-1976-1977-1978-1979-1980-1981-1982-1983-1984-1985-1986-1987-1988-1989-1990-1991-1992-1993-1994-1995-1996-1997-1998-1999-2000-2001-2002-2003-2004-2005-2006-2007-2008-2009-2010-2011-2012-2013-2014-2015-2016-2017-2018-2019-2020-2021-2022-2023-2024-2025-2026-2027-2028-2029-2030-2031-2032-2033-2034-2035-2036-2037-2038-2039-2040-2041-2042-2043-2044-2045-2046-2047-2048-2049-2050-2051-2052-2053-2054-2055-2056-2057-2058-2059-2060-2061-2062-2063-2064-2065-2066-2067-2068-2069-2070-2071-2072-2073-2074-2075-2076-2077-2078-2079-2080-2081-2082-2083-2084-2085-2086-2087-2088-2089-2090-2091-2092-2093-2094-2095-2096-2097-2098-2099-2100-2101-2102-2103-2104-2105-2106-2107-2108-2109-2110-2111-2112-2113-2114-2115-2116-2117-2118-2119-2120-2121-2122-2123-2124-2125-2126-2127-2128-2129-2130-2131-2132-2133-2134-2135-2136-2137-2138-2139-2140-2141-2142-2143-2144-2145-2146-2147-2148-2149-2150-2151-2152-2153-2154-2155-2156-2157-2158-2159-2160-2161-2162-2163-2164-2165-2166-2167-2168-2169-2170-2171-2172-2173-2174-2175-2176-2177-2178-2179-2180-2181-2182-2183-2184-2185-2186-2187-2188-2189-2190-2191-2192-2193-2194-2195-2196-2197-2198-2199-2200-2201-2202-2203-2204-2205-2206-2207-2208-2209-2210-2211-2212-2213-2214-2215-2216-2217-2218-2219-2220-2221-2222-2223-2224-2225-2226-2227-2228-2229-2230-2231-2232-2233-2234-2235-2236-2237-2238-2239-2240-2241-2242-2243-2244-2245-2246-2247-2248-2249-2250-2251-2252-2253-2254-2255-2256-2257-2258-2259-2260-2261-2262-2263-2264-2265-2266-2267-2268-2269-2270-2271-2272-2273-2274-2275-2276-2277-2278-2279-2280-2281-2282-2283-2284-2285-2286-2287-2288-2289-2290-2291-2292-2293-2294-2295-2296-2297-2298-2299-2300-2301-2302-2303-2304-2305-2306-2307-2308-2309-2310-2311-2312-2313-2314-2315-2316-2317-2318-2319-2320-2321-2322-2323-2324-2325-2326-2327-2328-2329-2330-2331-2332-233

sport

Girl Wonder a real good sport



KEITH ELLIOTT
at large

Every sports star knows the feeling – that nightmare moment when you have to retire because you are just too old. Well, maybe that is fair enough when you are in your late 30s. But spare a thought for Harriet Stynn, one of our top sportswomen. She had to quit a promising football career – at nine.

Her mother, Sue, battled with the Football Association, invoked the Equal Opportunities Commission and wrote enough letters to start an alphabet factory. The FA, living up to its pious reputation, was unmovable. "They came up with feeble excuses like problems of changing rooms. It seems ridiculous that girls can still play a tactical sport like rugby but can't play 11-a-side football with boys after nine years old," Sue said.

So Harriet, who lives in Twickenham, took up rugby – and rapidly became a star at that. Sadly, it looks like her prospects with London Scottish are limited, too. Though she is an automatic choice for the club's junior team, she has reached the ripe old age of 11. That means she will have to switch to women-only rugby next year. RFU rules, you understand.

How good is she? Well, Harriet was the only girl in a London Scottish squad of 26 that has recently returned from a Scottish Borders tour, playing centre against junior clubs from Melrose, Jed-Forest, Kilsno and Selkirk. She was not there as a team maker and kit washer, either. Norrie Jackson, the chairman of London Scottish's mini-rugby section, says: "It's uncanny. She is an amazing player, totally committed and unquestionably one of our best tacklers. She can compete perfectly well against boys."

Harriet herself is disappointed but not distraught. She has, after all, plenty of other options. She is national triathlon champion for her age group, she ran in last month's Flora London mini-marathon finishing 148th, and she's in the England under-11 girls' chess squad. She's in the school netball team, and fancies her chances at shot putt and long jump. Quite simply, whatever she turns her hand to turns into trophies, medals and badges.

By now you have probably built up a mental picture: tall for her age, an Amazon with an inquisitive moustache, compensating for her unattractiveness with sporting aggression. Dogging her steps, parents who never quite made it themselves and are determined to do so through their daughter.

Wrong, wrong, wrong, wrong and wrong. The biggest shock is to discover that Harriet is tiny: 4ft and not many inches. This little thing terrorising boys a head taller? The secret may be that she is also wonderfully self-assured without being arrogant or precocious. The acting maxim – nev-

er work with kids and animals – is a good lesson for journalists, too. Eleven-year-olds who can discuss training programmes, motivation and ambitions are rare indeed. Her parents have such confidence in her ability to handle a press interview that they leave her alone (though mum hovers in the kitchen).

There is no genetic reason why she should be a sporting natural. Her parents teach special needs, not PE. Sue's involvement runs to an occasional gym session while her father, Simon, Loughborough-trained, she manages a school football team, does the occasional triathlon and has completed a dozen marathons with a best time of just under three hours – scarcely the DNA of superstars.

Harriet's sporting career started at three, when she entered a fun run. A year later, she showed an aptitude for gymnastics and won a few trophies, but gave it up (aged nine) because it took up 12 hours a week – time she wanted to spend on other ventures.

At school, she proved so good at football that she was an automatic choice for the team (she has even got a trophy for Man of the Match). She played midfield, scored a few goals and never had any problems about being a girl in a field of boys. "I changed in the same changing rooms. It was a problem. I think the boys actually behaved themselves better because there was a girl around."

Afterwards she played a little with Fulham's under-16 girls squad but found that when you're only nine, a 15-year old is like someone from Brodningham. "They were really big," she recalls. When her younger brother Adam went for a trial with London Scot-



Pocket battleship: Four-foot-something Harriet Stynn is a walking Sports Hall of Fame

Photograph: Howard Boylan

tish juniors, she tagged along, liked the game and got involved. Bumps and bruises do not worry her. "Even though it's a contact sport, people tackle you to get the ball, not to hurt you," she says. Her mother is less sanguine. "Her legs get covered in bruises and she had some heavy falls in the Scottish games, but it doesn't worry her. Personally, I would be devastated if she came home with a broken nose or a cauliflower ear."

Then came triathlons. When her dad took part, she joined in, liked

that too and last year won six of the seven races in her age group to become national champion. "She is naturally very competitive in everything she does," her father says. "She doesn't need to be pushed. She even keeps a training diary."

Almost every evening of Harriet's week involves athletics, swimming, cycling, running or rugby training, though on Fridays she is involved in drama, and some Saturdays there is a chess match. "We're glad that she's got a balance between the physical and the cerebral," says

her mother. "But ultimately, it's her decision about what she does."

Harriet has not settled on one sport yet. She enjoys them all. Ask what sports she doesn't like and she thinks hard. "Hm, can't think of one." This summer, she hopes to play cricket. She would like to try skiing, or even ski-jumping.

Her Christmas presents were sports kits and a pair of roller blades. Toys? "It means I have to find time to sit down and play with them." Her bedroom is filled with trophies and pictures of her com-

peting. Idols? She names Simon Lessing, Britain's triathlon champion, not Take That.

She is even remarkably mature about the future. No vows of Olympic medals or being the first woman to play for England in the World Cup: she likes the idea of physiotherapy, and wouldn't mind being a woman referee. A laudable ambition, but you feel she may be underselling herself. Another Dudley Thompson? I made sure and got her autograph (for my daughters, you understand).

FOOTBALL: Manager Brown anxious not to repeat mistakes made after last championship by calling on young contenders

Fresh faces add verve to Scotland's next venture

PHIL SHAW
reports from Miami

Craig Brown yesterday formally registered the 22 players on duty in the United States as Scotland's pool for the European Championship – and promptly unveiled plans to "freshen up" his squad when the World Cup qualifying campaign starts later in the summer.

In contrast with his English counterpart's brinkmanship over Peter Beardsley and Robert Lee, Brown had no agonising choices to make. The selection process was simplified by the unavailability of Alan McLearen, Paul McStay and Duncan Ferguson. Only two

players not included, Richard Gough and Pat Nevin, might have made the cut in different circumstances.

More than half the squad are aged 30 or over, the average being reduced to 29 only by the inclusion of back-up players such as Eoin Jess and Scott Gemmill. There are 12 Scottish-based players and 10 "Anglos". Ally McColist is the only member whose goal tally at international level is into double figures.

Brown gave a glimpse of the possible future composition of the Scotland side by revealing the names of six players who comprised his "contingency plan" for the finals. The defenders were Arsenal's Scott Marshall, of whose perfor-

mance in the Under-21 team's 2-1 defeat in Barcelona he had received glowing reports, and Celtic's Jackie McNamara. The midfield understudies were Stephen Glass of Aberdeen, and Charlie Miller, of Rangers, with Barrie's Andy Liddell and Crystal Palace's Dougie Freedman the stand-by strikers. Among them Aberdeen's Jamie Buchanan, son of the former Scotland captain Martin, are to cover for injured players at training games in England.

"After we played so well at Euro 92 in Sweden, we went into the opening World Cup qualifier in Switzerland with the same squad," Brown recalls. "We lost 3-1, and maybe with

hindsight we should have brought in some fresh faces."

"We've already tried to change it a bit with the Gemmills and the Burleys, and we'll be looking at these players very carefully before we go to Austria at the end of August," Brown said.

"But first things first – we now have to concentrate on peaking three times in eight days." To that end, Scotland today will work on set pieces. Perhaps stung by the suggestion of the United States captain, John Harkes, that they looked "like a team on vacation", Brown will also stage a full-scale practice match tomorrow at the Orange Bowl, scene of their overnight friendly against Colombia.

Craig reflects on his lesson

Scotland's defeated youngsters were trying to think positively yesterday in the wake of their European Under-21 Championship semi-final defeat by Spain.

The young Scots, who were bidding to reach the European final for the first time, were given a master-class, in particular by the teenage prodigy Ivan de la Peña, in a 2-1 defeat in Barcelona on Tuesday night. De la Peña justified all his rave reviews – and the reputed £1m salary he is already getting from Barcelona – culminating in a brilliant 35th-minute goal from a 30-yard free-kick.

But now Tommy Craig's team must pick themselves up to play France on Friday in the third place play-off and the defeat has served only to strengthen their resolve.

The Celtic striker Simon Donnelly admitted the Spanish were a class outfit, but added: "The boys feel that, in an attacking sense, we didn't play and it's disappointing because we know we can do better. So we intend to put that right on Friday against France. We want to finish third. That is the best we can do."

Mike McCarthy, the Republic of Ireland manager, yesterday denied that he was close to resigning Roy Keane's future with the national side. McCarthy said he had received a box telephone call from someone pretending to be Keane, but had had no contact with the player himself, and therefore was standing by his decision to omit him from the tour to America.

can now do that and that's what we'll be aiming for. It's not going to be as exciting as being in a final but we can raise ourselves." De la Peña created an early opening goal for Oscar, but the Scots came roaring back to level matters midway through the first half with a header from Arsenal's Scott Marshall.

But that man De la Peña had the final word – leaving Donnelly to admit that the Spanish playmaker is one of the best talents he has ever seen.

"I don't think I've ever seen a free-kick that moved so much," said Donnelly, whose version of events was backed up by goalkeeper Derek Stiffie.

The Aberdeen keeper, who will set a new caps record for Scottish goalkeepers at this level when he takes the field against the French in the Olympic Stadium on Friday, insisted he had little chance with De la Peña's sensational strike.

He said: "The bend that De la Peña put on the ball was phenomenal. The free-kick started off looking as if it was going three yards outside the post before coming in."

Sexton takes blame

Dave Sexton shook off the disappointment of seeing his England side crash to a surprising defeat against Angola in the Umbro World Under-21 tournament at Toulon on Tuesday night, and then shouldered some of the blame for the result himself for changing a winning team.

Sexton rang the changes, even though he had seen his youngsters open their campaign in the tournament with a 1-0 victory over Belgium on Friday courtesy of a Steve Slade goal.

And on Tuesday night, England paid the price as an early penalty by Caesar Muhonga – awarded when the Queen's Park Rangers player Chris Plummer fouled Sidonio Malamba – and a late strike by Valdo Costa gave Angola an unexpected 2-0 success.

"It was a disappointing result and a disappointing performance," Sexton said afterwards. "It's always a risk changing a team when you have a winning start."

"You would normally keep the same team but the usefulness of this tournament is to look at players. We started quite brightly but got caught playing square balls and balls back."

Manchester City's Michael Brown attempted to inject some life into England with two long-range efforts and Tottenham starlet Slade, who has already caught the future England manager Glenn Hoddle's attention, should have done better than blast a volley high and wide before the break.

But the writing was on the wall for Sexton's boys when Manchester United's David

Beckham saw an effort hit the post, and Costa's breakaway effort sealed the issue.

"It's a learning question of what to do and what not to do," Sexton reflected. "I thought we deserved a goal and you would have put money on David Beckham putting his chance away."

"Their first goal was a silly goal to give away. We lost a bit of confidence and it's a knock to the lads' pride because it's better than that."

"But now nobody in football is surprised at the improvement in football throughout the world."

"Each country brings an important trait to the game. Everybody brings something to the game and nobody has got everything. It's good experience for the lads and to learn something for next time out."

CHAMPIONSHIP COUNTDOWN: No 8 Switzerland

Old favourites left at home

When Switzerland became the first country to qualify for Euro 96, the hills were alive with the sound of celebrations. It was the first time they had made the finals and, following on from their promising 1994 World Cup, the mood was optimistic.

Seven months on, this has all but evaporated and the Swiss come to Wembley next week with few of their countrymen expecting anything more than a quick return home. The problems began almost as soon as they had qualified as Roy Hodgson, the coach, accepted an offer from Internazionale. The Londoner, known as King Roy in Switzerland, offered to combine the two jobs until after Euro 96 – but the Swiss FA opted to appoint Artur Jorg instead.

Jorge came with the right credentials. A multi-lingual Portuguese, he would have the same neutral perspective on intercontinental rivalry as Hodgson. He had coached Porto to the European Cup and had a brief, successful spell with his own national team. Yet he soon upset supporters and media, changing Hodgson's long-established 4-4-2 to 3-5-2. A defeat at Luxembourg followed and the final straw came at the weekend when he dropped Adrian Knup and Alain Sutter.

Knup is not a prolific striker at domestic level but for Switzerland he has scored a remarkable 26 goals in 45 appearances, one of them at Wembley in November. Sutter, while he has been struggling to match his form of USA 94, is a Swiss favourite. He has been playing for the national side for a decade, having made his debut at 17.

"It was nothing to do with



personalities," said Jorge, which usually suggests that is precisely what it was about. The Swiss media had their own conspiracy theory. With Bobby Robson gone to Barcelona, the Porto job is vacant – Jorge, so the theory goes, is aiming to make such a disaster of Euro 96 that the Swiss FA sacks him, thus enabling him to return to Porto.

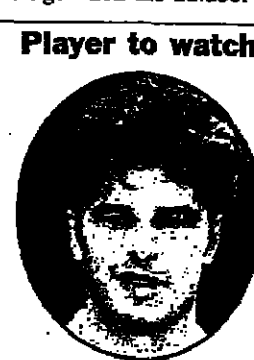
The omission of Knup and Sutter certainly appears strange when the number of

players already absent with injury are considered. The Argentine-born player of the year Nestor Subiat, Turkish-born midfielder Murat Yakin and left-back Pascal Thuler are out while Alain Geiger, the long-serving captain, and Stephane Chapuisat are still recovering from injury.

A fit Geiger is crucial to the side. Although he is slowing down with his experience, and Stephane Henchoz's intimidating presence, form a solid defensive back. The flanks are less secure. Marc Hottiger is suspended for the opening game against England while Yvan Quentin lacks concentration and class.

Much will depend on the German-based pair Ciriaco Sforza, the playmaker, and Chapuisat. If the latter fails to regain form after his knee ligament operation the onus will be on Kubaly Turkyilmaz, the one-time conqueror of Manchester United with Galatasaray. That Old Trafford memory, and Switzerland's 4-1 win over Romania in the last World Cup, will remind England not to take them lightly.

Glenn Moore



Ciriaco Sforza
(Bayern Munich)

Tipped for great things from the moment he made his debut for Grasshopper Zurich at 18. Now 26, he has been an international for five years. Began as a sweeper but now plays the holding role, dictating the play with his passing and occasionally pushing forward himself. Useful at set-pieces. Parents were Italian immigrants.

SQUAD

Goalkeepers	Stefan Leimann	Son
	Marco Pascolo	Servette
	Joel Cornu	Neuchâtel Xamax
Defenders	Marco Hottiger	Evian
	Stephane Henchoz	Hamburg
	Yvan Quentin	Son
	Ramon Vega	Grasshopper
	Raphael Widly	Son
	Alain Geiger	Grasshopper
	Subatien Marmarat	Neuchâtel Xamax
	Roger Rothlisberger	Neuchâtel Xamax
Midfielders	Ciriaco Sforza	Bayern Munich
	Subatien Marmarat	Son
	Christophe Gervill	St Etienne
	Marcel Keller	Grasshopper
	Alexander Gmülli	Grasshopper
	Christophe Gervill	Son
	John Van Vleet	Gazax
Forwards	Marco Geisler	Norwich
	Stephane Chapuisat	Borussia Dortmund
	Kubaly Turkyilmaz	Grasshopper
	David Sosa	Servette

مكتبة الجليل



Wembley is a very special place for all Scots, and the games against England hold great memories for me. The one I remember best was 1977, when the Tartan Army ended up taking most of the place home with them!



In the Independent's comprehensive guide to Euro 96 on Monday, Gary McAllister talks to Phil Shaw

An exclusive talk with Bill's best mate and mentor

THE

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Nothing new about footballers behaving badly

Like me, plenty of people must have thought about telling Paul Gascoigne to run off and play with the other children. A lot of the time you can't help feeling that he should be sent to bed without any dinner.

An unavoidable conclusion is that England's most accomplished footballer is only just out of short trousers and a passion for Thomas the Tank Engine videos.

Whatever Gascoigne did or did not do on the England squad's flight home from Hong Kong, contemplation of the embarrassment he has frequently caused, and the fairly obvious notion that he is 29 going on the age of a preschool pupil, should not persuade anyone to suppose that poor conduct from professional footballers is without precedent in previous generations of heroes.

The attitude of professional footballers generally is shaped by the fact that they are men playing a boys game. It is a world of relentless mickie taking and juvenile pranks. The principal topics of conversation in dressing rooms are money and sex. Players who read books are viewed with deep suspicion. Some years ago a televised attempt to portray a day in the life of the former Celtic winger, Jimmy Johnstone, revealed depressingly that he spent most of his time after training "just hangin' about".

Booze sometimes comes into it too. "Why do your players drink so much?" asked the late Gigi Perronace who brokered the earliest transfers of British players to Italian clubs. During the five hugely successful years John Charles spent with Juventus he never

saw a player the worse for drink. "There was always wine on the table at meal times but nobody took more than a couple of glasses," he recalled. "They don't have to be told either. Drinking just isn't a part of their culture."

German and Dutch players have a reputation for falling out among themselves and with their coaches, but unlike their British counterparts they are unlikely to seek out the nearest bar.

Drink fuelled a scandal involving the England team at Belgrade airport in 1974 shortly after the Football Association fired Alf Ramsey. Temporarily under the guidance of Joe Mercer, some of the England players took advantage of a more relaxed atmosphere and began drinking heavily on the flight, thus alerting fellow trav-



Ken Jones, Chief Sports Writer, believes that the majority of players cannot always be relied upon to discipline themselves

ellers to the possibility of an incident. Allowed to straggle through immigration instead of being ushered as they were under Ramsey, the first arrivals began clowning about on a luggage carousel to the annoyance of a watching policeman. Although innocent of this prattish behaviour, Kevin Keegan, being closest to hand, was arrested.

No liberties were taken during Ramsey's time. "Would you think about allowing us to travel in casual gear," Bobby

Charlton asked Ramsey before England undertook a summer tour. "I'll think about it," Ramsey replied, adding quickly: "I've thought about it. We'll travel in blazers and flannels."

Ramsey let it be known early that he would not tolerate even minor breaches of discipline. On the eve of England's departure from Lisbon for the United States in the summer of 1964, four senior players returning to the hotel 30 minutes after curfew each found a passport and air ticket on his pil-

low. "There are four people here who need to see me," Ramsey said curtly the next morning at breakfast. One was Bobby Charlton. "We hadn't misbehaved, gone out on the town or anything," he said. "Just a little late getting back. But Alf wasn't having any excuses. He told us that if it had been possible to get replacements we would have been on the plane home. Right away, we knew exactly where we stood with Alf."

The thing to know about the majority of professional footballers is that they cannot always be relied upon to discipline themselves. Expecting all times is asking for trouble. "Treat players like adults and there is a good chance that they will respond accordingly," Ron Greenwood said when man-

aging West Ham. Not many years afterwards, five members of his team, including Bobby Moore and Jimmy Greaves, were suspended and fined for spending time in a nightclub on the eve of an FA Cup defeat at Blackpool.

Nothing much has changed, although from personal experience as a teenage professional things appeared to be different in the decade following World War II, probably because teams were made up mostly of players who had spent five years in uniform.

Jimmy Adamson, who played in a fine Burnley team of the 1960s, had this thought as their manager. "It would be interesting to see how many of my lot would make it if they were told to make their own way to our next away match. Eight? Nine? Not all of them, that's for sure."

Nevertheless, what we are talking about mainly is childishness, just another expression of the larger lout culture, fostered in football by salaries that are, in the main, out of all proportion to ability and celebrity favouring.

It doesn't begin to compare with the awfulness of charges laid this week in the United States against Darryl Henley who turned out at corner back for the Los Angeles Rams. Arraigned on drugs offences, Henley is alleged to have called on a mobile telephone from his prison cell to put out contract bids, totalling \$1m (£660,000) on a judge and a peace officer.

As for Gascoigne, it is said he responds best when aware of loving attention. Well, so do my small grandsons. Perhaps that is it. Put Gascoigne with small children and he is with his people.

£10m offer to link QPR with Wasps

STEVE BAILE

Combining football and rugby clubs, much touted since rugby union went professional nine months ago, will become reality if Queen's Park Rangers and Wasps accept bids from a music magnate who intends to bring them together at Loftus Road.

Chris Wright, majority shareholder of the television and entertainment group Chrysalis, yesterday tabled an £8m offer to buy the recently relegated football club from Richard Thompson. At the same time he proposed paying £1.75m for a 49.9 per cent stake in Wasps, with another £1m available for players' contracts.

Rangers director Alan Hedges said that Wright's was just one of three offers for the football club. One is fronted by the former Guinness chief, Ernest Saunders.

"I have been a supporter at Loftus Road for 20 years. That's why I want to get involved - because I am a fanatic," Wright said yesterday. He said that Ray Wilkins would definitely continue as manager, and would have money to buy new players.

Wright believed he had the deal "in the bag" two days ago but said that Thompson

"changed the parameters - and that usually means asking for more money".

Wasps have asked for 21 days to consider Wright's offer, which is contingent on their playing first-team matches at Loftus Road and using their present facility at Sudbury near Wembley for second-team fixtures for both the football and rugby clubs, though Wright is reportedly interested in developing Sudbury if his QPR interest goes unrequited.

Wright's plan received the immediate endorsement of their captain, the England flanker Lawrence Dallaglio, and the Wasps players.

"The QPR link-up would undoubtedly be good for Wasps," Dallaglio said yesterday. "It would provide us with the best stadium facilities in the country and help us go into the new era of professional rugby in the right environment to produce a trophy-winning side."

He added: "The surface is like a bowling-green and would be fantastic to play on." Quite how long it would stay in such pristine condition is arguable, though, remembering the experience of Cardiff City when the Cardiff rugby league side played at Ninian Park in the early 1980s. Then, the rugby, even

without union's churningly intensive scrummaging, rucking and mauling, played havoc with the turf.

That would be just one of the implications that the Football League would want to investigate. "Any member club wishing to share its ground with another sporting activity would need our permission," League spokesman Chris Hull said.

"There would be obvious concerns as to the standard of pitches for League matches if another sport were to be staged on the same ground."

There are also potential problems with the pitch size. On the few occasions rugby has used football facilities - for instance, when the North played New Zealand at Anfield in 1993 - the pitch has had to be shortened in order to accommodate even a truncated goal area.

"These proposals not only offer both clubs financial security but also the chance to establish London's premier sporting venue at Loftus Road," Wright said. "We would ensure that Wasps and QPR retain their individual identities but are able to benefit from the huge marketing and commercial opportunities that the joint organisation would provide."

Wigan link, page 27



Me and my shadow: Mary Pierce serves her way to victory in the second round of the French Open

Photograph: Gary M Prior/Allsport

Woodruff ruffles Agassi's feathers

Tennis

JOHN ROBERTS reports from Paris

The niftiest move Andre Agassi made here yesterday was when he stepped into a waiting car in the parking area beneath Court Suzanne Lenglen and was driven along the Avenue de la Porte D'Auteuil and out of reach of media interrogators.

Dodging interviews after being eliminated in the second round of the French Open by Chris Woodruff, an American compatriot ranked No 72 in the world, will cost Agassi an automatic \$2,000 (£1,350) fine - double the penalty for uttering obscenities during his opening match - but it will hardly leave him without the means to travel to Wimbledon.

While it would have been interesting to hear the third seed's reasoning after another of those hit-or-miss performances which punctuate his eccentric career, premature departures from clay-court events by Agassi are not exactly uncommon. Since losing in consecutive finals here in 1990 and 1991 he has become something of an *au revoir* Andre.

Last year, seeded No 1, he was troubled by a hip injury when losing in straight sets to Russia's Yevgeny Kafelnikov in the quarter-finals. Yesterday there was no excuse. Although somewhat perplexed by the solid play of an unruffled opponent over five sets, Agassi committed 63 unforced errors, 12 of them double-faults, scarcely the form of a man who needs the French title to complete a set of the four Grand Slams.

Woodruff was in less of a hurry to leave the grounds. The 23-year-old was so overcome in his moment of victory that he broke down and cried on the court. Here was a player who became

so disaffected with scuffling on the international satellite circuit that only nine months ago he considered giving up. "I had one foot out the door," he said, "but I got some help from my coach, my dad and a sports psychologist that I worked with, and that allowed me to hang in there."

Woodruff certainly hung in yesterday, out-lasting his celebrated opponent over three hours to win 4-6, 6-4, 6-7, 6-3, 6-2. While taking nothing away from himself, Woodruff was in a better position than anyone else to spot the flaws in Agassi's performance. "I thought he was impatient sometimes," he said. "He was pretty determined to drive the ball through me after four or five shots. It seemed like he was always trying to play 'offence' and had no real defence."

That was evident each time Agassi threatened to take control of the match, and was encapsulated in the final set. Having won the opening seven points, an impetuous Agassi failed to capitalise on four break points in the second game.

Woodruff then became the

beneficiary of Agassi's loose play to break in the fifth and seventh games. And when match point arrived with Woodruff serving at 5-2, 40-15, Agassi netted a backhand approach.

Aside from beating Agassi, Woodruff was also privileged to have a few words with him. "After the match he just said 'Congratulations', which I thought was pretty classy. Also, before we went out on the court, he said, 'How're you doing? My name is Andre', as if I didn't know that."

No introductions were necessary on the Centre Court when Pete Sampras, the top seed, played Sergi Bruguera, who won the title in 1993 and 1994. They met as early as round two because Bruguera's ranking has slipped to No 23. Sampras set about his task as if the Spaniard was little more than a practice partner, comfortably winning the opening sets. He then gave Bruguera the sniff of an opportunity, and before we knew it the match had moved into a fifth set.

It was then that Sampras demonstrated his determination as well as his skill and fitness, controlling the important points to advance to the third round. "This was by far the best win I've had on clay," Sampras said. "My serve won it for me." He now plays Todd Martin.

Bruguera, the most eminent of the Spanish challengers to fall, was joined by Alberto Costa, the No 12 seed, who was surprisingly eliminated by a compatriot, Francisco Claver.

Monica Seles again lacked conviction when serving, but her groundstrokes proved too powerful for Naoko Sawamatsu. Seles won, 7-6, 6-2. Yi Jingqian, who caused Tuesday's upset against Jennifer Capriati, came down to earth with a 6-0, 6-3 defeat by Barbara Rittner.

Results, Sporting Digest, page 27



Agassi: \$2,000 fine

THE INDEPENDENT CROSSWORD

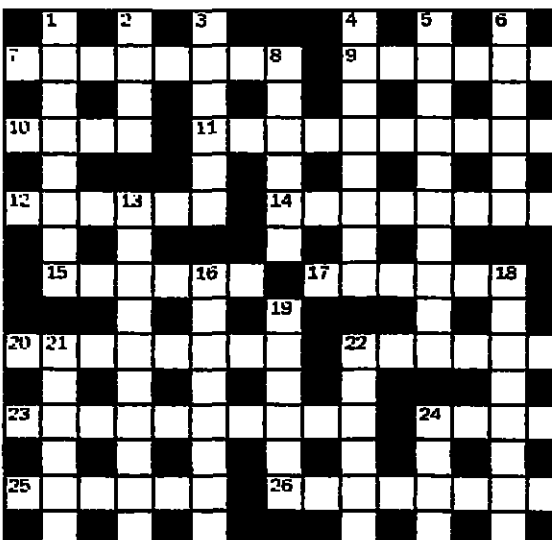
Meaning what?

Look it up in the Franklin Language Master.

No. 3008, Thursday 30 May

By Phil

Wednesday's Solution



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100 Down: SHADOW

Phil suggests that solvers read the letters in the perimeter of the puzzle, starting in square 1 and moving clockwise.

ACROSS
7 Shabby old Italian leader (10)
8 Piece of music - a good one to be used in a party (6)
9 No source of peace-keepers will bear this name (4)
10 Am I always unable to bring in Liberal support? (10)
11 Opening misadventure in Christ's tale of the sower's grounds (6)
12 Heavy precipitation sweeping in to strike deserted area of SE Asia (8)

DOWN
15 Mislead Derek due to change (6)
16 English couple of times put in an appeal for help in fights (3-3)
17 Criticise tailless bird - one with a dowdy appearance (8)
18 Bird is observed while in hide (6)
19 Following United is fine in two, possibly - implying some think it this? (10)
20 It's brought in to a former dictator (4)
21 Holidaying out short after outrageous Canadian city (6)
22 Bright light has, in short, burnt us badly (8)

THE FRANKLIN SCRAMBLE

Make the longest word you can from ZODANSECH Last Saturday's Scramble: ACQUANT

Win a Franklin Language Master worth £25

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To enter, phone 0891 311 017 before midnight with the answers to the first three solutions across and down. Leave your answers, your name, address and daytime telephone. Winners will be selected from all correct entries received. No cash alternative. Normal Newspaper Publishing rules apply. Editor's decision is final. Winners' names can be obtained by sending an SAE to Franklin Independent Crossword, 7 Windmill Business Village, Brooklands Close, Sunbury TW20 7JY. Calls cost 39p per minute (cheap rates, 39p per minute all other times).

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More women are victims of INTESTACY than DIVORCE

A woman, on average, lives longer than a man. So she is more likely to have to face the difficulties of intestacy - the legal term for being left in a mess because her husband didn't make a will.

Many men assume that, on their death, all they own will automatically go to their wives. This isn't so. When a man dies intestate, not just his wife but brothers, sisters and even cousins may have a claim on what he owned.

His widow may have to sell the house to pay off his relations. None of this need happen if he makes a will. Yet seven out of ten people fail to take this simple step.

Now, as a service to the public, WWF UK (World Wide Fund For Nature) has produced its own plain language guide to making a will. It explains:

- why everyone needs to make a will
 - how to go about it
 - and how to minimise tax liability on what you leave behind.
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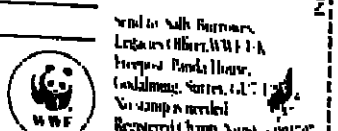
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